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GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN.

(Second Series.)

BY

LAFCADIO HEARN.

IN ONE VOLUME.

TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

By the same Author,

KOKORO . . . . . 1 vol.
KWAIDAN . . . . . 1 vol.
GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN (FIRST SERIES) . . 1 vol.

GLIMPSES

OF

UNFAMILIAR JAPAN

(Second Series)

BY

LAFCADIO HEARN

AUTHOR OF "KOKORO," "KWAIDAN," ETC.

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GLIMPSES OF UNFAMILIAR JAPAN.

(SECOND SERIES.)

I.

JIZŌ.

I.

I HAVE passed another day in wandering among the temples, both Shintō and Buddhist. I have seen many curious things; but I have not yet seen the face of the Buddha.

Repeatedly, after long wearisome climbing of stone steps, and passing under gates full of gargoyles,—heads of elephants and heads of lions,—and entering shoeless into scented twilight, into enchanted gardens of golden lotus-flowers of paper, and there waiting for my eyes to become habituated to the dimness, I have looked in vain for images. Only an opulent glimmering confusion of things half-seen,—vague altar-splendours created by gilded bronzes twisted into riddles, by vessels of indescribable shape, by enigmatic texts of gold, by mysterious glittering pendent things,—all framing in only a shrine with doors fast closed.

What has most impressed me is the seeming joyousness of popular faith. I have seen nothing grim, austere, or self-repressive. I have not even noted anything approaching the solemn. The bright temple courts and even the temple steps are thronged with laughing children, playing curious games; and mothers, entering the sanctuary to pray, suffer their little ones to creep about the matting and crow. The people take their religion lightly and cheerfully: they drop their cash in the great alms-box, clap their hands, murmur a very brief prayer, then turn to laugh and talk and smoke their little pipes before the temple entrance. Into some shrines, I have noticed the worshippers do not enter at all; they merely stand before the doors and pray for a few seconds, and make their small offerings. Blessed are they who do not too much fear the gods which they have made!

II.

Akira is bowing and smiling at the door. He slips off his sandals, enters in his white digitated stockings, and, with another smile and bow, sinks gently into the proffered chair. Akira is an interesting boy. With his smooth beardless face, and clear bronze skin, and blue-black hair trimmed into a shock that shadows his forehead to the eyes, he has almost the appearance, in his long wide-sleeved robe and snowy stockings, of a young Japanese girl.

I clap my hands for tea, hotel tea, which he calls "Chinese tea." I offer him a cigar, which he declines; but with my permission, he will smoke his pipe. Thereupon he draws from his girdle a Japanese pipe-case and tobacco-pouch combined; pulls out of the pipe-case a little brass pipe with a bowl scarcely large enough to hold a pea;

pulls out of the pouch some tobacco so finely cut that it looks like hair, stuffs a tiny pellet of this preparation in the pipe, and begins to smoke. He draws the smoke into his lungs, and blows it out again through his nostrils. Three little whiffs, at intervals of about half a minute, and the pipe, emptied, is replaced in its case.

Meanwhile I have related to Akira the story of my disappointments.

"Oh, you can see him to-day," responds Akira, "if you will take a walk with me to the Temple of Zotokuin. For this is the Busshōe, the festival of the Birthday of Buddha. But he is very small, only a few inches high. If you want to see a great Buddha, you must go to Kamakura. There is a Buddha in that place, sitting upon a lotus; and he is fifty feet high."

So I go forth under the guidance of Akira. He says he may be able to show me "some curious things."

III.

There is a sound of happy voices from the temple, and the steps are crowded with smiling mothers and laughing children. Entering, I find women and babies pressing about a lacquered table in front of the doorway. Upon it is a little tub-shaped vessel of sweet tea,—amacha; and standing in the tea is a tiny figure of Buddha, one hand pointing upward and one downward. The women, having made the customary offering, take up some of the tea with a wooden ladle of curious shape, and pour it over the statue, and then, filling the ladle a second time, drink a little, and give a sip to their babies. This is the ceremony of washing the statue of Buddha.

Near the lacquered stand on which the vessel of sweet tea rests is another and lower stand supporting a temple

bell shaped like a great bowl. A priest approaches with a padded mallet in his hand and strikes the bell. But the bell does not sound properly: he starts, looks into it, and stoops to lift out of it a smiling Japanese baby. The mother, laughing, runs to relieve him of his burden; and priest, mother, and baby all look at us with a frankness of mirth in which we join.

Akira leaves me a moment to speak with one of the temple attendants, and presently returns with a curious lacquered box, about a foot in length, and four inches wide on each of its four sides. There is only a small hole in one end of it; no appearance of a lid of any sort.

"Now," says Akira, "if you wish to pay two sen, we shall learn our future lot according to the will of the gods."

I pay the two sen, and Akira shakes the box. Out comes a narrow slip of bamboo, with Chinese characters written thereon.

"Kitsu!" cries Akira. "Good-fortune. The number is fifty-and-one."

Again he shakes the box; a second bamboo slip issues from the slit.

"Dai kitsu! great good-fortune. The number is ninety-and-nine."

Once more the box is shaken; once more the oracular bamboo protrudes.

"Kyo!" laughs Akira. "Evil will befall us. The number is sixty-and-four."

He returns the box to a priest, and receives three mysterious papers, numbered with numbers corresponding to the numbers of the bamboo slips. These little bamboo slips, or divining-sticks, are called *mikuji*.

This, as translated by Akira, is the substance of the text of the paper numbered fifty-and-one: –

"He who draweth forth this mikuji, let him live according to the heavenly law and worship Kwannon. If his trouble be a sickness, it shall pass from him. If he have lost aught, it shall be found. If he have a suit at law, he shall gain. If he love a woman, he shall surely win her,—though he should have to wait. And many happinesses will come to him."

The dai-kitsu paper reads almost similarly, with the sole differences that, instead of Kwannon, the deities of wealth and prosperity—Daikoku, Bishamon, and Benten—are to be worshipped, and that the fortunate man will not have to wait at all for the woman loved. But the *kyō* paper reads thus:—

"He who draweth forth this mikuji, it will be well for him to obey the heavenly law and to worship Kwannon the Merciful. If he have any sickness, even much more sick he shall become. If he have lost aught, it shall never be found. If he have a suit at law, he shall never gain it. If he love a woman, let him have no more expectation of winning her. Only by the most diligent piety can he hope to escape the most frightful calamities. And there shall be no felicity in his portion."

"All the same, we are fortunate," declares Akira. "Twice out of three times we have found luck. Now we will go to see another statue of Buddha."

And he guides me, through many curious streets, to the southern verge of the city.

IV.

Before us rises a hill, with a broad flight of stone steps sloping to its summit, between foliage of cedars and maples. We climb; and I see above me the Lions of Buddha waiting,—the male yawning menace, the female with mouth closed. Passing between them, we enter a

large temple court, at whose farther end rises another wooded eminence.

And here is the temple, with roof of blue-painted copper tiles, and tilted eaves and gargoyles and dragons, all weather-stained to one neutral tone. The paper screens are open, but a melancholy rhythmic chant from within tells us that the noonday service is being held: the priests are chanting the syllables of Sanscrit texts transliterated into Chinese,—intoning the Sutra called the Sutra of the Lotus of the Good Law. One of those who chant keeps time by tapping with a mallet, cotton-wrapped, some grotesque object shaped like a dolphin's head, all lacquered in scarlet and gold, which gives forth a dull, booming tone,—a mokugyo.

To the right of the temple is a little shrine, filling the air with fragrance of incense-burning. I peer in through the blue smoke that curls up from half a dozen tiny rods planted in a small brazier full of ashes; and far back in the shadow I see a swarthy Buddha, tiara-coiffed, with head bowed and hands joined, just as I see the Japanese praying, erect in the sun, before the thresholds of temples. The figure is of wood, rudely wrought and rudely coloured: still the placid face has beauty of suggestion.

Crossing the court to the left of the building, I find another flight of steps before me, leading up a slope to something mysterious still higher, among enormous trees. I ascend these steps also, reach the top, guarded by two small symbolic lions, and suddenly find myself in cool shadow, and startled by a spectacle totally unfamiliar.

Dark —almost black—soil, and the shadowing of trees immemorially old, through whose vaulted foliage the sunlight leaks thinly down in rare flecks: a crepuscular light, tender and solemn, revealing the weirdest host of un-

familiar shapes,—a vast congregation of grey, columnar, mossy things, stony, monumental, sculptured with Chinese ideographs. And about them, behind them, rising high above them, thickly set as rushes in a marsh-verge, tall slender wooden tablets, like laths, covered with similar fantastic lettering, pierce the green gloom by thousands, by tens of thousands.

And before I can note other details, I know that I am in a hakaba, a cemetery,—a very ancient Buddhist cemetery.

These laths are called in the Japanese tongue sotoba.* All have notches cut upon their edges on both sides near the top,—five notches; and all are painted with Chinese characters on both faces. One inscription is always the phrase *"To promote Buddha-hood,"* painted immediately below the dead man's name; the inscription upon the other surface is always a sentence in Sanscrit whose meaning has been forgotten even by those priests who perform the funeral rites. One such lath is planted behind the tomb as soon as the monument (*haka*) is set up; then another every seven days for forty-nine days; then one after the lapse of a hundred days; then one at the end of a year; then one after the passing of three years; and at successively longer periods others are erected during one hundred years.

And in almost every group I notice some quite new, of freshly planed unpainted white wood, standing beside others grey or even black with age; and there are many, still older, from whose surface all the characters have disappeared. Others are lying on the sombre clay. Hundreds stand so loose in the soil that the least breeze jostles and clatters them together.

* Derived from the Sanscrit *stupa*.

Not less unfamiliar in their forms, but far more interesting, are the monuments of stone. One shape I know represents five of the Buddhist elements: a cube supporting a sphere which upholds a pyramid on which rests a shallow square cup with four crescent edges and tilted corners, and in the cup a pyriform body poised with the point upwards. These successively typify Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Ether, the five substances wherefrom the body is shapen, and into which it is resolved by death; the absence of any emblem for the Sixth element, *Knowledge*, touches more than any imagery conceivable could do. And, nevertheless, in the purpose of the symbolism, this omission was never planned with the same idea that it suggests to the Occidental mind.

Very numerous also among the monuments are low, square, flat-topped shafts, with a Japanese inscription in black or gold, or merely cut into the stone itself. Then there are upright slabs of various shapes and heights, mostly rounded at the top, usually bearing sculptures in relief. Finally, there are many curiously angled stones, or natural rocks, dressed on one side only, with designs etched upon the smoothed surface. There would appear to be some meaning even in the irregularity of the shape of these slabs; the rock always seems to have been broken out of its bed at five angles, and the manner in which it remains balanced perpendicularly upon its pedestal is a secret that the first hasty examination fails to reveal.

The pedestals themselves vary in construction; most have three orifices in the projecting surface in front of the monument supported by them, usually one large oval cavity, with two small round holes flanking it. These smaller holes serve for the burning of incense-rods; the larger cavity is filled with water. I do not know exactly

why. Only my Japanese companion tells me "it is an ancient custom in Japan thus to pour out water for the dead." There are also bamboo cups on either side of the monument in which to place flowers.

Many of the sculptures represent Buddha in meditation, or in the attitude of exhorting; a few represent him asleep, with the placid, dreaming face of a child, a Japanese child; this means Nirvana. A common design upon many tombs also seems to be two lotus-blossoms with stalks intertwined.

In one place I see a stone with an English name upon it, and above that name a rudely chiselled cross. Verily the priests of Buddha have blessed tolerance; for this is a Christian's tomb!

And all is chipped and mouldered and mossed; and the grey stones stand closely in hosts of ranks, only one or two inches apart, ranks of thousands upon thousands, always in the shadow of the great trees. Overhead innumerable birds sweeten the air with their trilling; and far below, down the steps behind us, I still hear the melancholy chant of the priests, faintly, like a humming of bees.

Akira leads the way in silence to where other steps descend into a darker and older part of the cemetery; and at the head of the steps, to the right, I see a group of colossal monuments, very tall, massive, mossed by time, with characters cut more than two inches deep into the grey rock of them. And behind them, in lieu of laths, are planted large sotoba, twelve to fourteen feet high, and thick as the beams of a temple roof. These are graves of priests.

V.

Descending the shadowed steps, I find myself face to face with six little statues about three feet high, standing in a row upon one long pedestal. The first holds a Buddhist incense-box; the second, a lotus; the third, a pilgrim's staff (*tsue*): the fourth is telling the beads of a Buddhist rosary; the fifth stands in the attitude of prayer, with hands joined; the sixth bears in one hand the shakujō, or mendicant priest's staff, having six rings attached to the top of it, and in the other hand the mystic jewel, Nio-i ho-jiu, by virtue whereof all desires may be accomplished. But the faces of the Six are the same: each figure differs from the other by the attitude only and emblematic attribute; and all are smiling the like faint smile. About the neck of each figure a white cotton bag is suspended; and all the bags are filled with pebbles; and pebbles have been piled high also about the feet of the statues, and upon their knees, and upon their shoulders; and even upon their aureoles of stone, little pebbles are balanced. Archaic, mysterious, but inexplicably touching, all these soft childish faces are.

Roku Jizo "The Six Jizō"—these images are called in the speech of the people; and such groups may be seen in many a Japanese cemetery. They are representations of the most beautiful and tender figure in Japanese popular faith, that charming divinity who cares for the souls of little children, and consoles them in the place of unrest, and saves them from the demons. "But why are those little stones piled about the statues?" I ask.

Well, it is because some say the child-ghosts must build little towers of stones for penance in the Sai-no-Kawara, which is the place to which all children after

death must go. And the Oni, who are demons, come to throw down the little stone-piles as fast as the children build; and these demons frighten the children, and torment them. But the little souls run to Jizō, who hides them in his great sleeves, and comforts them, and makes the demons go away. And every stone one lays upon the knees or at the feet of Jizō, with a prayer from the heart, helps some child-soul in the Sai-no-Kawara to perform its long penance.*

"All little children," says the young Buddhist student who tells all this, with a smile as gentle as Jizō's own, "must go to the Sai-no-Kawara when they die. And there they play with Jizō. The Sai-no-Kawara is beneath us, below the ground.**

* "The real origin of the custom of piling stones before the images of Jizō and other divinities is not now known to the people. The custom is founded upon a passage in the famous Sutra, 'The Lotus of the Good Law.'

"Even the little boys who, in playing, erected here and there heaps of sand, with the intention of dedicating them as Stupas to the Ginas,—they have all of them reached enlightenment." *Saddharma Pundarika*, c. II. v. 81 (Kern's translation), "Sacred Books of the East," vol. XXI.

** The original Jizō has been identified by Orientalists with the Sanscrit *Kshitegarbha;* as Professor Chamberlain observes, the resemblance in sound between the names Jizō and Jesus "is quite fortuitous." But in Japan Jizō has become totally transformed: he may justly be called the most Japanese of all Japanese divinities. According to the curious old Buddhist book, *Sai no Kawara Kuchi zu sami no den*, the whole Sai-no-Kawara legend originated in Japan, and was first written by the priest Kuya Shōnin, in the sixth year of the period called Ten-Kei, in the reign of the Emperor Shuyaku, who died in the year 946. To Kuya was revealed, in the village of Sai-in, near Kyōto, during a night passed by the dry bed of the neighbouring river, Sai-no-Kawa (said to be the modern Serikawa), the condition of child-souls in the Meido. [Such is the legend in the book; but Professor Chamberlain has shown that the name *Sai-no-Kawara*, as

"And Jizō has long sleeves to his robe; and they pull him by the sleeves in their play; and they pile up little stones before him to amuse themselves. And those stones you see heaped about the statues are put there by people for the sake of the little ones, most often by mothers of dead children who pray to Jizō. But grown people do not go to the Sai-no-Kawara when they die." *

And the young student, leaving the Roku-Jizō, leads the way to other strange surprises, guiding me among the tombs, showing me the sculptured divinities.

Some of them are quaintly touching; all are interesting; a few are positively beautiful.

The greater number have nimbi. Many are represented kneeling, with hands joined exactly like the figures of saints in old Christian art. Others, holding lotus-flowers, appear to dream the dreams that are meditations. One figure reposes on the coils of a great serpent. Another, coiffed with something resembling a tiara, has six hands, one pair joined in prayer, the rest, extended, holding out various objects; and this figure stands upon a prostrate demon, crouching face downwards. Yet another image, cut in low relief, has arms innumerable. The first pair of hands are joined, with the palms together; while from behind the line of the shoulders, as if shadowily emanat-

now written, signifies "The Dry Bed of the River of Souls," and modern Japanese faith places that river in the Meido.] Whatever be the true history of the myth, it is certainly Japanese; and the conception of Jizō as the lover and playfellow of dead children belongs to Japan.

There are many other popular forms of Jizō, one of the most common being that Koyasu-Jizō to whom pregnant women pray. There are but few roads in Japan upon which statues of Jizō may not be seen; for he is also the patron of pilgrims.

* Except those who have never married.

ing therefrom, multitudinous arms reach out in all directions, vapory, spiritual, holding forth all kinds of objects as in answer to supplication, and symbolising, perhaps, the omnipotence of love. This is but one of the many forms of Kwannon, the goddess of mercy, the gentle divinity who refused the rest of Nirvana to save the souls of men, and who is most frequently pictured as a beautiful Japanese girl. But here she appears as Senjiu-Kwannon (Kwannon-of-the-Thousand-Hands). Close by stands a great slab bearing upon the upper portion of its chiselled surface an image in relief of Buddha, meditating upon a lotus; and below are carven three weird little figures, one with hands upon its eyes, one with hands upon its ears, one with hands upon its mouth; these are Apes. "What do they signify?" I enquire. My friend answers vaguely, mimicking each gesture of the three sculptured shapes:—

"I see no bad thing; I hear no bad thing; I speak no bad thing."

Gradually, by dint of reiterated explanations, I myself learn to recognise some of the gods at sight. The figure seated upon a lotus, holding a sword in its hand, and surrounded by bickering fire, is Fudō-Sama,—Buddha as the Unmoved, the Immutable: the Sword signifies Intellect; the Fire, Power. Here is a meditating divinity, holding in one hand a coil of ropes: the divinity is Buddha; those are the ropes which bind the passions and desires. Here also is Buddha slumbering, with the gentlest, softest Japanese face,—a child face,—and eyes closed, and hand pillowing the cheek, in Nirvana. Here is a beautiful virgin-figure, standing upon a lily: Kwannon-Sama, the Japanese Madonna. Here is a solemn seated figure, holding in one hand a vase, and lifting the other with the

gesture of a teacher: Yakushi-Sama, Buddha the All-Healer, Physician of Souls.

Also, I see figures of animals. The Deer of Buddhist birth-stories stands, all grace, in snowy stone, upon the summit of tōrō, or votive lamps. On one tomb I see, superbly chiselled, the image of a fish, or rather the Idea of a fish, made beautifully grotesque for sculptural purposes, like the dolphin of Greek art. It crowns the top of a memorial column; the broad open jaws, showing serrated teeth, rest on the summit of the block bearing the dead man's name; the dorsal fin and elevated tail are elaborated into decorative impossibilities. "Mokugyo," says Akira. It is the same Buddhist emblem as that hollow wooden object, lacquered scarlet-and-gold, on which the priests beat with a padded mallet while chanting the Sutra. And, finally, in one place I perceive a pair of sitting animals, of some mythological species, supple of figure as greyhounds. "Kitsune," says Akira,—"foxes." So they are, now that I look upon them with knowledge of their purpose; idealised foxes, foxes spiritualised, impossibly graceful foxes. They are chiselled in some grey stone. They have long, narrow, sinister, glittering eyes; they seem to snarl; they are weird, very weird creatures, the servants of the Rice-God, retainers of Inari-Sama, and properly belong, not to Buddhist iconography, but the imagery of Shintō.

No inscriptions upon these tombs corresponding to our epitaphs. Only family names,—the names of the dead and their relatives, and a sculptured crest, usually a flower. On the sotoba, only Sanscrit words.

Farther on, I find other figures of Jizō, single reliefs, sculptured upon tombs. But one of these is a work of art so charming that I feel a pain at being obliged to

pass it by. More sweet, assuredly, than any imaged Christ, this dream in white stone of the playfellow of dead children, like a beautiful young boy, with gracious eyelids half closed, and face made heavenly by such a smile as only Buddhist art could have imagined, the smile of infinite lovingness and supremest gentleness. Indeed, so charming the ideal of Jizō is that in the speech of the people a beautiful face is always likened to his,—"Jizō-kao," as the face of Jizō.

VI.

And we come to the end of the cemetery, to the verge of the great grove.

Beyond the trees, what caressing sun, what spiritual loveliness in the tender day! A tropic sky always seemed to me to hang so low that one could almost bathe one's fingers in its lukewarm liquid blue by reaching upward from any dwelling-roof. But this sky, softer, fainter, arches so vastly as to suggest the heaven of a larger planet. And the very clouds are not clouds, but only dreams of clouds, so filmy they are; ghosts of clouds, diaphanous spectres, illusions!

All at once I become aware of a child standing before me, a very young girl who looks up wonderingly at my face; so light her approach that the joy of the birds and whispering of the leaves quite drowned the soft sound of her feet. Her ragged garb is Japanese; but her gaze, her loose fair hair, are not of Nippon only, the ghost of another race—perhaps my own—watches me through her flower-blue eyes. A strange playground surely is this for thee, my child; I wonder if all these shapes about thee do not seem very weird, very strange, to that little soul

of thine. But no; 'tis only I who seem strange to thee; thou hast forgotten the Other Birth, and thy father's world.

Half-caste, and poor, and pretty, in this foreign port! Better thou wert with the dead about thee, child! better than the splendour of this soft blue light the unknown darkness for thee. There the gentle Jizō would care for thee, and hide thee in his great sleeves, and keep all evil from thee, and play shadowy play with thee; and this thy forsaken mother, who now comes to ask an alms for thy sake, dumbly pointing to thy strange beauty with her patient Japanese smile, would put little stones upon the knees of the dear god that thou mightest find rest.

VII.

"Oh, Akira! you must tell me something more about Jizō, and the ghosts of the children in the Sai-no-Kawara."

"I cannot tell you much more," answers Akira, smiling at my interest in this charming divinity; "but if you will come with me now to Kuboyama, I will show you, in one of the temples there, pictures of the Sai-no-Kawara and of Jizō, and the Judgment of Souls."

So we take our way in two jinrikisha to the Temple Rin-ko ji, on Kuboyama. We roll swiftly through a mile of many coloured narrow Japanese streets; then through a half mile of pretty suburban ways, lined with gardens, behind whose clipped hedges are homes light and dainty as cages of wicker-work; and then, leaving our vehicles, we ascend green hills on foot by winding paths, and traverse a region of fields and farms. After a long walk in the hot sun we reach a village almost wholly composed of shrines and temples.

The outlying sacred place—three buildings in one inclosure of bamboo fences—belongs to the Shingon sect.

A small open shrine, to the left of the entrance, first attracts us. It is a dead-house: a Japanese bier is there. But almost opposite the doorway is an altar covered with startling images.

What immediately rivets the attention is a terrible figure, all vermilion red, towering above many smaller images,—a goblin shape with immense cavernous eyes. His mouth is widely opened as if speaking in wrath, and his brows frown terribly. A long red beard descends upon his red breast. And on his head is a strangely shaped crown, a crown of black and gold, having three singular lobes: the left lobe bearing an image of the moon; the right, an image of the sun; the central lobe is all black. But below it, upon the deep gold-rimmed black band, flames the mystic character signifying KING. Also, from the same crown-band protrude at descending angles, to left and right, two gilded sceptre-shaped objects. In one hand the King holds an object similar of form, but larger, his shaku or regal wand. And Akira explains.

This is Emma-Ō, Lord of Shadows, Judge of Souls, King of the Dead.* Of any man having a terrible countenance the Japanese are wont to say, *"His face is the face of Emma."*

At his right hand white Jizō-Sama stands upon a many-petaled rosy lotus.

At his left is the image of an aged woman—weird Sodzu-Baba, she who takes the garments of the dead away by the banks of the River of the Three Roads, which flows through the phantom-world. Pale blue her robe is; her hair and skin are white; her face is strangely wrinkled; her small, keen eyes are hard. The statue is very old;

* In Sanscrit, "Yama-Raja." But the Indian conception has been totally transformed by Japanese Buddhism.

and the paint is scaling from it in places, so as to lend it a ghastly leprous aspect.

There are also images of the Sea-goddess Benten and of Kwannon-Sama, seated on summits of mountains forming the upper part of miniature landscapes made of some unfamiliar composition, and beautifully coloured; the whole being protected from careless fingering by strong wire nettings stretched across the front of the little shrines containing the panorama. Benten has eight arms: two of her hands are joined in prayer; the others, extended above her, hold different objects,—a sword, a wheel, a bow, an arrow, a key, and a magical gem. Below her, standing on the slopes of her mountain throne, are her ten robed attendants, all in the attitude of prayer; still farther down appears the body of a great white serpent, with its tail hanging from one orifice in the rocks, and its head emerging from another. At the very bottom of the hill lies a patient cow. Kwannon appears as Senjiu-Kwannon, offering gifts to men with all the multitude of her arms of mercy.

But this is not what we came to see. The pictures of heaven and hell await us in the Zen-Shū temple close by, whither we turn our steps.

On the way my guide tells me this:—

"When one dies the body is washed and shaven, and attired in white, in the garments of a pilgrim. And a wallet (*sauvabukkero*), like the wallet of a Buddhist pilgrim, is hung about the neck of the dead; and in this wallet are placed three rin.* And these coin are buried with the dead.

* Funeral customs, as well as the beliefs connected with them, vary considerably in different parts of Japan. Those of the eastern provinces differ from those of the western and southern. The old

"For all who die must, except children, pay three rin at the Sanzu-no-Kawa, 'The River of the Three Roads.' When souls have reached that river, they find there the Old Woman of the Three Roads, Sodzu-Baba, waiting for them: she lives on the banks of that river, with her husband, Ten Datsu-Ba. And if the Old Woman is not paid the sum of three rin, she takes away the clothes of the dead, and hangs them upon the trees."

VIII.

The temple is small, neat, luminous with the sun pouring into its widely opened shōji; and Akira must know the priests well, so affable their greeting is. I make a little offering, and Akira explains the purpose of our visit. Thereupon we are invited into a large bright apartment in a wing of the building, overlooking a lovely garden. Little cushions are placed on the floor for us to sit upon; and a smoking-box is brought in, and a tiny lacquered table about eight inches high. And while one of the priests opens a cupboard, or alcove with doors, to find the kakemono, another brings us tea, and a plate of curious confectionery consisting of various pretty objects made of a paste of sugar and rice flour. One is a perfect model of a chrysanthemum blossom; another is a lotus; others are simply large, thin, crimson lozenges bearing admirable designs,—flying birds, wading storks, fish, even miniature landscapes. Akira picks out the chrysan-

practice of placing articles of value in the coffin—such as the metal mirror formerly buried with a woman, or the sword buried with a man of the Samurai caste—has become almost obsolete. But the custom of putting money in the coffin still prevails: in Izumo the amount is always six rin, and these are called Rokudō-kane, or "The Money for the Six Roads."

themum, and insists that I shall eat it; and I begin to demolish the sugary blossom, petal by petal, feeling all the while an acute remorse for spoiling so beautiful a thing.

Meanwhile four kakemono have been brought forth, unrolled, and suspended from pegs upon the wall; and we rise to examine them.

They are very, very beautiful kakemono, miracles of drawing and of colour,—subdued colour, the colour of the best period of Japanese art; and they are very large, fully five feet long and more than three broad, mounted upon silk.

And these are the legends of them:—

First kakemono:—

In the upper part of the painting is a scene from the Shaba, the world of men which we are wont to call the Real,—a cemetery with trees in blossom, and mourners kneeling before tombs. All under the soft blue light of Japanese day.

Underneath is the world of ghosts. Down through the earth-crust souls are descending. Here they are flitting all white through inky darknesses; here farther on, through weird twilight, they are wading the flood of the phantom River of the Three Roads, Sanzu-no-Kawa. And here on the right is waiting for them Sodzu-Baba, the Old Woman of the Three Roads, ghastly and gray, and tall as a nightmare. From some she is taking their garments;—the trees about her are heavily hung with the garments of others gone before.

Farther down I see fleeing souls overtaken by demons,—hideous blood-red demons, with feet like lions, with faces half human, half bovine, the physiognomy of minotaurs in fury. One is rending a soul asunder. Another demon is forcing souls to reincarnate themselves in bodies

of horses, of dogs, of swine. And as they are thus reincarnated they flee away into shadow.

Second kakemono:—

Such a gloom as the diver sees in deep-sea water, a lurid twilight. In the midst a throne, ebon-coloured, and upon it an awful figure seated,—Emma Dai-Ō, Lord of Death and Judge of Souls, unpitying, tremendous. Frightful guardian spirits hover about him,—armed goblins. On the left, in the foreground below the throne, stands the wondrous Mirror, Tabarino-Kagami, reflecting the state of souls and all the happenings of the world. A landscape now shadows its surface,—a landscape of cliffs and sand and sea, with ships in the offing. Upon the sand a dead man is lying, slain by a sword slash; the murderer is running away. Before this mirror a terrified soul stands, in the grasp of a demon, who compels him to look, and to recognise in the murderer's features his own face. To the right of the throne, upon a tall-stemmed flat stand, such as offerings to the gods are placed upon in the temples, a monstrous shape appears, like a double-faced head freshly cut off, and set upright upon the stump of the neck. The two faces are the Witnesses: the face of the Woman (*Mirume*) sees all that goes on in the Shaba; the other face is the face of a bearded man, the face of Kaguhana, who smells all odours, and by them is aware of all that human beings do. Close to them, upon a reading-stand, a great book is open, the record-book of deeds. And between the Mirror and the Witnesses white shuddering souls await judgment.

Farther down I see the sufferings of souls already sentenced. One, in lifetime a liar, is having his tongue torn out by a demon armed with heated pincers. Other souls, flung by scores into fiery carts, are being dragged

away to torment. The carts are of iron, but resemble in form certain hand-waggons which one sees every day being pulled and pushed through the streets by bare-limbed Japanese labourers, chanting always the same melancholy alternating chorus, *Haidah! hei! haidah! hei!* But these demon-waggoners—naked, blood-coloured, having the feet of lions and the heads of bulls—move with their flaming waggons at a run, like jinrikisha-men.

All the souls so far represented are souls of adults.

Third kakemono:—

A furnace, with souls for fuel, blazing up into darkness. Demons stir the fire with poles of iron. Down through the upper blackness other souls are falling head downward into the flames.

Below this scene opens a shadowy landscape,—a faint-blue and faint-grey world of hills and vales, through which a river serpentines,—the Sai-no-Kawara. Thronging the banks of the pale river are ghosts of little children, trying to pile up stones. They are very, very pretty, the child-souls, pretty as real Japanese children are (it is astonishing how well is child-beauty felt and expressed by the artists of Japan. Each child has one little short white dress.

In the foreground a horrible devil with an iron club has just dashed down and scattered a pile of stones built by one of the children. The little ghost, seated by the ruin of its work, is crying, with both pretty hands to its eyes. The devil appears to sneer. Other children also are weeping near by. But, lo! Jizō comes, all light and sweetness, with a glory moving behind him like a great full moon; and he holds out his shakujō, his strong and holy staff, and the little ghosts catch it and cling to it, and are drawn into the circle of his protection. And

other infants have caught his great sleeves, and one has been lifted to the bosom of the god.

Below this Sai-no-Kawara scene appears yet another shadow-world, a wilderness of bamboos! Only white-robed shapes of women appear in it. They are weeping; the fingers of all are bleeding. With finger-nails plucked out must they continue through centuries to pick the sharp-edged bamboo-grass.

Fourth kakemono:—

Floating in glory, Dai-Nichi-Nyorai, Kwannon-Sama, Amida Buddha. Far below them as hell from heaven surges a lake of blood, in which souls float. The shores of this lake are precipices studded with sword-blades thickly set as teeth in the jaws of a shark; and demons are driving naked ghosts up the frightful slopes. But out of the crimson lake something crystalline rises, like a beautiful, clear water-spout; the stem of a flower,—a miraculous lotus, bearing up a soul to the feet of a priest standing above the verge of the abyss. By virtue of his prayer was shaped the lotus which thus lifted up and saved a sufferer.

Alas! there are no other kakemonos. There were several others: they have been lost!

No: I am happily mistaken; the priest has found, in some mysterious recess, one more kakemono, a very large one, which he unrolls and suspends beside the others. A vision of beauty, indeed! but what has this to do with faith or ghosts? In the foreground a garden by the waters of the sea, of some vast blue lake,—a garden like that at Kanagawa, full of exquisite miniature landscape-work: cascades, grottoes, lily-ponds, carved bridges, and trees snowy with blossom, and dainty pavilions outjutting over the placid azure water. Long, bright, soft bands

of clouds swim athwart the background. Beyond and above them rises a fairy magnificence of palatial structures, roof above roof, through an aureate haze like summer vapour: creations aerial, blue, light as dreams. And there are guests in these gardens, lovely beings, Japanese maidens. But they wear aureoles, star-shining: they are spirits!

For this is Paradise, the Gokuraku; and all those divine shapes are Bosatsu. And now, looking closer, I perceive beautiful weird things which at first escaped my notice.

They are gardening, these charming beings!—they are caressing the lotus-buds, sprinkling their petals with something celestial, helping them to blossom. And what lotus-buds! with colours not of this world. Some have burst open; and in their luminous hearts, in a radiance like that of dawn, tiny naked infants are seated, each with a tiny halo. These are Souls, new Buddhas, hotoke born into bliss. Some are very, very small; others larger; all seem to be growing visibly, for their lovely nurses are feeding them with something ambrosial. I see one which has left its lotus-cradle, being conducted by a celestial Jizo toward the higher splendours far away.

Above, in the loftiest blue, are floating tennin, angels of the Buddhist heaven, maidens with phœnix wings. One is playing with an ivory plectrum upon some stringed instrument, just as a dancing-girl plays her samisen; and others are sounding those curious Chinese flutes, composed of seventeen tubes, which are used still in sacred concerts at the great temples.

Akira says this heaven is too much like earth. The gardens, he declares, are like the gardens of temples, in spite of the celestial lotus-flowers; and in the blue roofs

of the celestial mansions he discovers memories of the tea-houses of the city of Saikyō.*

Well, what after all is the heaven of any faith but ideal reiteration and prolongation of happy experiences remembered,—the dream of dead days resurrected for us, and made eternal? And if you think this Japanese ideal too simple, too naïve, if you say there are experiences of the material life more worthy of portrayal in a picture of heaven than any memory of days passed in Japanese gardens and temples and tea-houses, it is perhaps because you do not know Japan, the soft, sweet blue of its sky, the tender colour of its waters, the gentle splendour of its sunny days, the exquisite charm of its interiors, where the least object appeals to one's sense of beauty with the air of something not made, but caressed, into existence.

IX.

"Now there is a wasan of Jizō," says Akira, taking from a shelf in the temple alcove some much-worn, blue-covered Japanese book. "A wasan is what you would call a hymn or psalm. This book is two hundred years old: it is called Sai-no-Kawara-kuchi-zu-sami no den, which is, literally, 'The Legend of the *Humming* of the Sai-no-Kawara.' And this is the wasan;" and he reads me the hymn of Jizō,—the legend of the murmur of the little ghosts, the legend of the humming of the Sai-no-Kawara,—rhythmically, like a song:** —

* Literally "Western Capital,"—modern name of Kyōto, ancient residence of the emperors. The name "Tōkyō," on the other hand, signifies "Eastern Capital."

** These first ten lines of the original will illustrate the measure of the wasan:—

"Not of this world is the story of sorrow.
The story of the Sai-no-Kawara,
At the roots of the Mountain of Shide;—
Not of this world is the tale; yet 't is most pitiful to hear.
For together in the Sai-no-Kawara are assembled
Children of tender age in multitude,—
Infants but two or three years old,
Infants of four or five, infants of less than ten:
In the Sai-no-Kawara are they gathered together.
And the voice of their longing for their parents,
The voice of their crying for their mothers and their fathers—
'Chichi koishi! haha koishi!'—
Is never as the voice of the crying of children in this world,
But a crying so pitiful to hear
That the sound of it would pierce through flesh and bone.
And sorrowful indeed the task which they perform,—
Gathering the stones of the bed of the river,
Therewith to heap the tower of prayers.
Saying prayers for the happiness of father, they heap the first tower;

Kore wa konoyo no koto narazu,
Shide no yamaji no suso no naru,
Sai-no-Kawara no monogatari
Kiku ni tsuketemo aware nari
Futatsu-ya, mitsu-ya, yotsu, itsutsu,

To nimo taranu midorigo ga
Sai-no-Kawara ni atsumari te,
Chichi koishi! haha koishi!
Koishi! koishi! to naku koe wa
Konoyo no koe towa ko to kawari.

Saying prayers for the happiness of mother, they heap the second tower;

Saying prayers for their brothers, their sisters, and all whom they loved at home, they heap the third tower.

Such, by day, are their pitiful diversions.

But ever as the sun begins to sink below the horizon,

Then do the Oni, the demons of the hells, appear,

And say to them,—'What is this that you do here?

'Lo! your parents still living in the Shaba-world

'Take no thought of pious offering or holy work:

'They do nought but mourn for you from the morning unto the evening.

'Oh, how pitiful! alas! how unmerciful!

'Verily the cause of the pains that you suffer

'Is only the mourning, the lamentation of your parents.'

And saying also, 'Blame never us!'

The demons cast down the heaped-up towers,

They dash the stones down with their clubs of iron.

But lo! the teacher Jizō appears.

All gently he comes, and says to the weeping infants:—

'Be not afraid, dears! be never fearful!

'Poor little souls, your lives were brief indeed!

'Too soon you were forced to make the weary journey to the Meido,

'The long journey to the region of the dead!

'Trust to me! I am your father and mother in the Meido,

'Father of all children in the region of the dead.'

And he folds the skirt of his shining robe about them;

So graciously takes he pity on the infants.

To those who cannot walk he stretches forth his strong shakujō;

And he pets the little ones, caresses them, takes them to his loving bosom.

So graciously he takes pity on the infants.

Namu Amida Butsu!"

II.

A PILGRIMAGE TO ENOSHIMA.

I.

KAMAKURA.

A long, straggling country village, between low wooded hills, with a canal passing through it. Old Japanese cottages, dingy, neutral-tinted, with roofs of thatch, very steeply sloping, above their wooden walls and paper shoji. Green patches on all the roof-slopes, some sort of grass; and on the very summits, on the ridges, luxurious growths of yane-shōbu,* the roof-plant, bearing pretty purple flowers. In the lukewarm air a mingling of Japanese odours, smells of saké, smells of seaweed soup, smells of daikon, the strong native radish; and dominating all, a sweet, thick, heavy scent of incense,—incense from the shrines of gods.

Akira has hired two jinrikisha for our pilgrimage; a speckless azure sky arches the world; and the land lies glorified in a joy of sunshine. And yet a sense of melancholy, of desolation unspeakable, weighs upon me as we roll along the bank of the tiny stream, between the mouldering lines of wretched little homes with grass growing on their roofs. For this mouldering hamlet represents all that remains of the million peopled streets of Yoritomo's capital, the mighty city of the Shōgunate, the ancient seat of feudal power, whither came the envoys of

* *Yane*, "roof;" *shōbu*, "sweet-flag" (*Acorus calamus*).

Kublai Khan demanding tribute, to lose their heads for their temerity. And only some of the unnumbered temples of the once magnificent city now remain, saved from the conflagrations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, doubtless because built in high places, or because isolated from the maze of burning streets by vast courts and groves. Here still dwell the ancient gods in the great silence of their decaying temples, without worshippers, without revenues, surrounded by desolations of rice-fields, where the chanting of frogs replaces the sea-like murmur of the city that was and is not.

II.

The first great temple,—En-gaku-ji,—invites us to cross the canal by a little bridge facing its outward gate, —a roofed gate with fine Chinese lines, but without carving. Passing it, we ascend a long, imposing succession of broad steps, leading up through a magnificent grove to a terrace, where we reach the second gate. This gate is a surprise; a stupendous structure of two stories,—with huge sweeping curves of roof and enormous gables,—antique, Chinese, magnificent. It is more than four hundred years old, but seems scarcely affected by the wearing of the centuries. The whole of the ponderous and complicated upper structure is sustained upon an open-work of round, plain pillars and cross-beams; the vast eaves are full of bird-nests; and the storm of twittering from the roofs is like a rushing of water. Immense the work is, and imposing in its aspect of settled power; but, in its way, it has great severity: there are no carvings, no gargoyles, no dragons; and yet the maze of projecting timbers below the eaves will both excite and delude expectation, so strangely does it suggest the grotesqueries and fantas-

ticalities of another art. You look everywhere for the heads of lions, elephants, dragons, and see only the four-angled ends of beams, and feel rather astonished than disappointed. The majesty of the edifice could not have been strengthened by any such carving.

After the gate another long series of wide steps, and more trees, millennial, thick-shadowing, and then the terrace of the temple itself, with two beautiful stone lanterns (*tōrō*) at its entrance. The architecture of the temple resembles that of the gate, although on a lesser scale. Over the doors is a tablet with Chinese characters, signifying, "Great, Pure, Clear, Shining Treasure." But a heavy framework of wooden bars closes the sanctuary, and there is no one to let us in. Peering between the bars I see, in a sort of twilight, first a pavement of squares of marble, then an aisle of massive wooden pillars upholding the dim lofty roof, and at the farther end, between the pillars, Shaka, colossal, black-visaged, gold-robed, enthroned upon a giant lotus fully forty feet in circumference. At his right hand some white mysterious figure stands, holding an incense-box; at his left, another white figure is praying with clasped hands. Both are of superhuman stature. But it is too dark within the edifice to discern who they may be, —whether disciples of the Buddha, or divinities, or figures of saints.

Beyond this temple extends an immense grove of trees, —ancient cedars and pines, —with splendid bamboos thickly planted between them, rising perpendicularly as masts to mix their plumes with the foliage of the giants: the effect is tropical, magnificent. Through this shadowing, a flight of broad stone steps slant up gently to some yet older shrine. And ascending them we reach another portal, smaller than the imposing Chinese structure through

which we already passed, but wonderful, weird, full of dragons, dragons of a form which sculptors no longer carve, which they have even forgotten how to make, winged dragons rising from a storm-whirl of waters or thereinto descending. The dragon upon the panel of the left gate has her mouth closed; the jaws of the dragon on the panel of the right gate are open and menacing. Female and male they are, like the lions of Buddha. And the whirls of the eddying water, and the crests of the billowing, stand out from the panel in astonishing boldness of relief, in loops and curlings of grey wood time-seasoned to the hardness of stone.

The little temple beyond contains no celebrated image, but a shari only, or relic of Buddha, brought from India. And I cannot see it, having no time to wait until the absent keeper of the shari can be found.

III.

"Now we shall go to look at the big bell," says Akira.

We turn to the left as we descend, along a path cut between hills faced for the height of seven or eight feet with protection-walls made green by moss; and reach a flight of extraordinarily dilapidated steps, with grass springing between their every joint and break,—steps so worn down and displaced by countless feet that they have become ruins, painful and even dangerous to mount. We reach the summit, however, without mishap, and find ourselves before a little temple, on the steps of which an old priest awaits us, with smiling bow of welcome. We return his salutation; but ere entering the temple turn to look at the tsurigane on the right,—the famous bell.

Under a lofty open shed, with a tilted Chinese roof, the great bell is hung. I should judge it to be fully nine

feet high, and about five feet in diameter, with lips about eight inches thick. The shape of it is not like that of our bells, which broaden toward the lips; this has the same diameter through all its height, and it is covered with Buddhist texts cut into the smooth metal of it. It is rung by means of a heavy swinging beam, suspended from the roof by chains, and moved like a battering-ram. There are loops of palm-fibre rope attached to this beam to pull it by; and when you pull hard enough, so as to give it a good swing, it strikes a moulding like a lotus-flower on the side of the bell. This it must have done many hundred times; for the square, flat end of it, though showing the grain of a very dense wood, has been battered into a convex disk with ragged protruding edges, like the surface of a long-used printer's mallet.

A priest makes a sign to me to ring the bell. I first touch the great lips with my hand very lightly; and a musical murmur comes from them. Then I set the beam swinging strongly; and a sound deep as thunder, rich as the bass of a mighty organ,—a sound enormous, extraordinary, yet beautiful,—rolls over the hills and away. Then swiftly follows another and lesser and sweeter billowing of tone; then another; then an eddying of waves of echoes. Only once was it struck, the astounding bell; yet it continues to sob and moan for at least ten minutes!

And the age of this bell is six hundred and fifty years.*

* At the time this paper was written, nearly three years ago, I had not seen the mighty bells at Kyōto and at Nara.

The largest bell in Japan is suspended in the grounds of the grand Jōdo temple of Chion-in, at Kyōto. Visitors are not allowed to sound it. It was cast in 1633. It weighs seventy-four tons, and requires, they say, twenty-five men to ring it properly. Next in size ranks the bell of the Daibutsu temple in Kyōto, which visitors are allowed to

In the little temple near by, the priest shows us a series of curious paintings, representing the six hundredth anniversary of the casting of the bell. (For this is a sacred bell, and the spirit of a god is believed to dwell within it.) Otherwise the temple has little of interest. There are some kakemono representing Iyeyasu and his retainers; and on either side of the door, separating the inner from the outward sanctuary, there are life-size images of Japanese warriors in antique costume. On the altars of the inner shrine are small images, grouped upon a miniature landscape-work of painted wood,—the Jiugo-Dōji, or Fifteen Youths,—the Sons of the Goddess Benten. There are gohei before the shrine, and a mirror upon it; emblems of Shintō. The sanctuary has changed hands in the great transfer of Buddhist temples to the state religion.

In nearly every celebrated temple little Japanese prints are sold, containing the history of the shrine, and its miraculous legends. I find several such things on sale at the door of the temple, and in one of them, ornamented with a curious engraving of the bell, I discover, with Akira's aid, the following traditions:—

IV.

In the twelfth year of Bummei, this bell rang itself. And one who laughed on being told of the miracle, met

ring on payment of a small sum. It was cast in 1615, and weighs sixty-three tons. The wonderful bell of Tōdaiji, at Nara, although ranking only third, is perhaps the most interesting of all. It is thirteen feet six inches high, and nine feet in diameter; and its inferiority to the Kyōto bells is not in visible dimensions so much as in weight and thickness. It weighs thirty-seven tons. It was cast in 733, and is therefore one thousand one hundred and sixty years old. Visitors pay one cent to sound it once.

with misfortune; and another, who believed, thereafter prospered, and obtained all his desires.

Now, in that time there died in the village of Tamanawa a sick man whose name was Ono-no-Kimi; and Ono-no-Kimi descended to the region of the dead, and went before the Judgment-Seat of Emma-Ō. And Emma, Judge of Souls, said to him, "You come too soon! The measure of life allotted you in the Shaba-world has not yet been exhausted. Go back at once." But Ono-no-Kimi pleaded, saying, "How may I go back, not knowing my way through the darkness?" And Emma answered him, "You can find your way back by listening to the sound of the bell of En-gaku-ji, which is heard in the Nan-en-budi world, going south." And Ono-no-Kimi went south, and heard the bell, and found his way through the darknesses, and revived in the Shaba-world.

Also in those days there appeared in many provinces a Buddhist priest of giant stature, whom none remembered to have seen before, and whose name no man knew, travelling through the land, and everywhere exhorting the people to pray before the bell of En-gaku-ji. And it was at last discovered that the giant pilgrim was the holy bell itself, transformed by supernatural power into the form of a priest. And after these things had happened, many prayed before the bell, and obtained their wishes.

V.

"Oh! there is something still to see," my guide exclaims as we reach the great Chinese gate again; and he leads the way across the grounds by another path to a little hill, previously hidden from view by trees. The face of the hill, a mass of soft stone perhaps one hundred feet high, is hollowed out into chambers, full of images. These

look like burial-caves; and the images seem funereal monuments. There are two storeys of chambers,—three above, two below; and the former are connected with the latter by a narrow interior stairway cut through the living rock. And all around the dripping walls of these chambers on pedestals are grey slabs, shaped exactly like the haka in Buddhist cemeteries, and chiselled with figures of divinities in high relief. All have glory-disks: some are naïve and sincere like the work of our own mediæval image-makers. Several are not unfamiliar. I have seen before, in the cemetery of Kuboyama, this kneeling woman with countless shadowy hands; and this figure tiara-coiffed, slumbering with one knee raised, and cheek pillowed upon the left hand,—the placid and pathetic symbol of the perpetual rest. Others, like Madonnas, hold lotus-flowers, and their feet rest upon the coils of a serpent. I cannot see them all, for the rock roof of one chamber has fallen in; and a sunbeam entering the ruin reveals a host of inaccessible sculptures half buried in rubbish.

But no!—this grotto-work is not for the dead; and these are not haka, as I imagined, but only images of the Goddess of Mercy. These chambers are chapels; and these sculptures are the En-gaku-ji-no-hyaku-Kwannon, "the Hundred Kwannons of En-gaku-ji." And I see in the upper chamber above the stairs a granite tablet in a rock-niche, chiselled with an inscription in Sanscrit transliterated into Chinese characters, "Adoration to the great merciful Kwan-ze-on, who looketh down above the sound of prayer."*

VI.

Entering the grounds of the next temple, the Temple of Ken-chō-ji, through the "Gate of the Forest of Con-

* In Sanscrit, Avalokitesvara. The Japanese Kwannon, or Kwan-

templative Words," and the "Gate of the Great Mountain of Wealth," one might almost fancy oneself re-entering, by some queer mistake, the grounds of En-gaku-ji. For the third gate before us, and the imposing temple beyond it, constructed upon the same models as those of the structures previously visited, were also the work of the same architect. Passing this third gate,—colossal, severe, superb, —we come to a fountain of bronze before the temple doors, an immense and beautiful lotus-leaf of metal, forming a broad shallow basin kept full to the brim by a jet in its midst.

This temple also is paved with black and white square slabs, and we can enter it with our shoes. Outside it is plain and solemn as that of En-gaku-ji; but the interior offers a more extraordinary spectacle of faded splendour. In lieu of the black Shaka throned against a background of flamelets, is a colossal Jizō-Sama, with a nimbus of fire, —a single gilded circle large as a waggon-wheel, breaking into fire-tongues at three points. He is seated upon an enormous lotus of tarnished gold,—over the lofty edge of which the skirt of his robe trails down. Behind him, standing on ascending tiers of golden steps, are glimmering hosts of miniature figures of him, reflections, multiplications of him, ranged there by ranks of hundreds, — the Thousand Jizō. From the ceiling above him droop the dingy splendours of a sort of daïs-work, a streaming circle of pendents like a fringe, shimmering faintly through

ze-on, is identical in origin with the Chinese virgin-goddess Kwanyin, adopted by Buddhism as an incarnation of the Indian Avalokitesvara. (See Eitel's *Handbook of Chinese Buddhism*.) But the Japanese Kwannon has lost all Chinese characteristics, has become artistically an idealisation of all that is sweet and beautiful in the woman of Japan.

the webbed dust of centuries. And the ceiling itself must once have been a marvel; all beamed in caissons, each caisson containing, upon a gold ground, the painted figure of a flying bird. Formerly the eight great pillars supporting the roof were also covered with gilding; but only a few traces of it linger still upon their worm-pierced surfaces, and about the bases of their capitals. And there are wonderful friezes above the doors, from which all colour has long since faded away, marvellous grey old carvings in relief; floating figures of tennin, or heavenly spirits playing upon flutes and biwa.

There is a chamber separated by a heavy wooden screen from the aisle on the right; and the priest in charge of the building slides the screen aside, and bids us enter. In this chamber is a drum elevated upon a brazen stand,—the hugest I ever saw, fully eighteen feet in circumference. Beside it hangs a big bell, covered with Buddhist texts. I am sorry to learn that it is prohibited to sound the great drum. There is nothing else to see except some dingy paper lanterns figured with the svastika, – the sacred Buddhist symbol called by the Japanese manji.

VII.

Akira tells me that in the book called Jizō-kyō-Kosui, this legend is related of the great statue of Jizō in this same ancient temple of Ken-chō-ji.

Formerly there lived at Kamakura the wife of a Rōnin* named Soga Sadayoshi. She lived by feeding silkworms and gathering the silk. She used often to visit

* Let the reader consult Mitford's admirable *Tales of Old Japan* for the full meaning of the term "Rōnin."

the temple of Ken-chō-ji; and one very cold day that she went there, she thought that the image of Jizō looked like one suffering from cold; and she resolved to make a cap to keep the god's head warm,—such a cap as the people of the country wear in cold weather. And she went home and made the cap and covered the god's head with it, saying, "Would I were rich enough to give thee a warm covering for all thine august body; but, alas! I am poor, and even this which I offer thee is unworthy of thy divine acceptance."

Now this woman very suddenly died in the fiftieth year of her age, in the twelfth month of the fifth year of the period called Chisho. But her body remained warm for three days, so that her relatives would not suffer her to be taken to the burning-ground. And on the evening of the third day she came to life again.

Then she related that on the day of her death she had gone before the judgment-seat of Emma, king and judge of the dead. And Emma, seeing her, became wroth, and said to her: "You have been a wicked woman, and have scorned the teaching of the Buddha. All your life you have passed in destroying the lives of silkworms by putting them into heated water. Now you shall go to the Kwakkto-Jigoku, and there burn until your sins shall be expiated." Forthwith she was seized and dragged by demons to a great pot filled with molten metal, and thrown into the pot, and she cried out horribly. And suddenly Jizō-Sama descended into the molten metal beside her, and the metal became like a flowing of oil and ceased to burn; and Jizō put his arms about her and lifted her out. And he went with her before King Emma, and asked that she should be pardoned for his sake, forasmuch as she had become related to him by one act

of goodness. So she found pardon, and returned to the Shaba-world.

"Akira," I ask, "it cannot then be lawful, according to Buddhism, for anyone to wear silk?"

"Assuredly not," replies Akira; "and by the law of Buddha priests are expressly forbidden to wear silk. Nevertheless," he adds with that quiet smile of his, in which I am beginning to discern suggestions of sarcasm, "nearly all the priests wear silk."

VIII.

Akira also tells me this:—

It is related in the seventh volume of the book Kamakurashi that there was formerly at Kamakura a temple called Emmei-ji, in which there was enshrined a famous statue of Jizō, called Hadaka-Jizō, or Naked Jizo. The statue was indeed naked, but clothes were put upon it; and it stood upright with its feet upon a chessboard. Now, when pilgrims came to the temple and paid a certain fee, the priest of the temple would remove the clothes of the statue; and then all could see that, though the face was the face of Jizō, the body was the body of a woman.

Now this was the origin of the famous image of Hadaka-Jizō standing upon the chessboard. On one occasion the great prince Taira-no-Tokyori was playing chess with his wife in the presence of many guests. And he made her agree, after they had played several games, that whosoever should lose the next game would have to stand naked on the chessboard. And in the next game they played his wife lost. And she prayed to Jizō to save her from the shame of appearing naked. And Jizō came in answer to her prayer and stood upon the chessboard,

and disrobed himself, and changed his body suddenly into the body of a woman.

IX.

As we travel on, the road curves and narrows between higher elevations, and becomes more sombre. *"Oi! mate!"* my Buddhist guide calls softly to the runners; and our two vehicles halt in a band of sunshine, descending, through an opening in the foliage of immense trees, over a flight of ancient mossy steps. "Here," says my friend, "is the temple of the King of Death; it is called Emma-Dō; and it is a temple of the Zen sect,—Zen-Oji. And it is more than seven hundred years old, and there is a famous statue in it."

We ascend to a small, narrow court in which the edifice stands. At the head of the steps, to the right, is a stone tablet, very old, with characters cut at least an inch deep into the granite of it, Chinese characters signifying, "This is the Temple of Emma, King."

The temple resembles outwardly and inwardly the others we have visited, and, like those of Shaka and of the colossal Jizō of Kamakura, has a paved floor, so that we are not obliged to remove our shoes on entering. Everything is worn, dim, vaguely grey; there is a pungent scent of mouldiness; the paint has long ago peeled away from the naked wood of the pillars. Throned to right and left against the high walls tower nine grim figures, five on one side, four on the other, wearing strange crowns with trumpet-shapen ornaments; figures hoary with centuries, and so like to the icon of Emma, which I saw at Kuboyama, that I ask, "Are all these Emma?" "Oh, no!" my guide answers; "these are his attendants only, the Jiu-Ō, the Ten Kings." "But there are only nine?"

I query. "Nine, and Emma completes the number. You have not yet seen Emma."

Where is he? I see at the farther end of the chamber an altar elevated upon a platform approached by wooden steps; but there is no image, only the usual altar furniture of gilded bronze and lacquer-ware. Behind the altar I see only a curtain about six feet square,—a curtain once dark red, now almost without any definite hue,—probably veiling some alcove. A temple guardian approaches, and invites us to ascend the platform. I remove my shoes before mounting upon the matted surface, and follow the guardian behind the altar, in front of the curtain. He makes me a sign to look, and lifts the veil with a long rod. And suddenly, out of the blackness of some mysterious profundity masked by that sombre curtain, there glowers upon me an apparition at the sight of which I involuntarily start back,—a monstrosity exceeding all anticipation,—a Face.*

A Face tremendous, menacing, frightful, dull red, as with the redness of heated iron cooling into grey. The first shock of the vision is no doubt partly due to the somewhat theatrical manner in which the work is suddenly revealed out of darkness by the lifting of the curtain. But as the surprise passes I begin to recognise the immense energy of the conception,—to look for the secret of the grim artist. The wonder of the creation is not in the

* There is a delicious Japanese proverb, the full humour of which is only to be appreciated by one familiar with the artistic representations of the divinities referred to:—

Karutoki no Jizō-gao,
Nasutoki no Emma-gao.

["Borrowing-time, the face of Jizō;
Repaying-time, the face of Emma."]

tiger frown, nor in the violence of the terrific mouth, nor in the fury and ghastly colour of the head as a whole: it is in the eyes,—eyes of nightmare.

X.

Now this weird old temple has its legend.

Seven hundred years ago, 'tis said, there died the great image-maker, the great busshi, Unke-Sosei. And Unke-Sosei signifies "Unke who returned from the dead." For when he came before Emma, the Judge of Souls, Emma said to him: "Living, thou madest no image of me. Go back unto earth and make one, now that thou hast looked upon me." And Unke found himself suddenly restored to the world of men; and they that had known him before, astonished to see him alive again, called him Unke-Sosei. And Unke-Sosei, bearing with him always the memory of the countenance of Emma, wrought this image of him, which still inspires fear in all who behold it; and he made also the images of the grim Jiu-O, the Ten Kings obeying Emma, which sit throned about the temple.

I want to buy a picture of Emma, and make my wish known to the temple guardian. Oh, yes, I may buy a picture of Emma, but I must first see the Oni. I follow the guardian out of the temple, down the mossy steps, and across the village highway into a little Japanese cottage, where I take my seat upon the floor. The guardian disappears behind a screen, and presently returns dragging with him the Oni,—the image of a demon, naked, blood-red, indescribably ugly. The Oni is about three feet high. He stands in an attitude of menace, brandishing a club. He has a head shaped something like the

head of a bull-dog, with brazen eyes; and his feet are like the feet of a lion. Very gravely the guardian turns the grotesquery round and round, that I may admire its every aspect; while a naïve crowd collects before the open door to look at the stranger and the demon.

Then the guardian finds me a rude woodcut of Emma, with a sacred inscription printed upon it; and as soon as I have paid for it, he proceeds to stamp the paper with the seal of the temple. The seal he keeps in a wonderful lacquered box, covered with many wrappings of soft leather. These having been removed, I inspect the seal, —an oblong, vermilion-red polished stone, with the design cut in intaglio upon it. He moistens the surface with red ink, presses it upon the corner of the paper bearing the grim picture, and the authenticity of my strange purchase is established forever.

XI.

You do not see the Dai Butsu as you enter the grounds of his long vanished temple, and proceed along a paved path across stretches of lawn; great trees hide him. But very suddenly, at a turn, he comes into full view and you start! No matter how many photographs of the colossus you may have already seen, this first vision of the reality is an astonishment. Then you imagine that you are already too near, though the image is at least a hundred yards away. As for me, I retire at once thirty or forty yards back, to get a better view. And the jinrikisha man runs after me, laughing and gesticulating, thinking that I imagine the image alive and am afraid of it.

But, even were that shape alive, none could be afraid of it. The gentleness, the dreamy passionlessness of those

features,—the immense repose of the whole figure,—are full of beauty and charm. And, contrary to all expectation, the nearer you approach the giant Buddha, the greater this charm becomes. You look up into the solemnly beautiful face,—into the half-closed eyes that seem to watch you through their eyelids of bronze as gently as those of a child; and you feel that the image typifies all that is tender and calm in the Soul of the East. Yet you feel also that only Japanese thought could have created it. Its beauty, its dignity, its perfect repose, reflect the higher life of the race that imagined it; and, though doubtless inspired by some Indian model, as the treatment of the hair and various symbolic marks reveal, the art is Japanese.

So mighty and beautiful the work is, that you will not for some time notice the magnificent lotus-plants of bronze, fully fifteen feet high, planted before the figure, on either side of the great tripod in which incense-rods are burning.

Through an orifice in the right side of the enormous lotus-blossom on which the Buddha is seated, you can enter into the statue. The interior contains a little shrine of Kwannon, and a statue of the priest Yuten, and a stone tablet bearing in Chinese characters the sacred formula, *Namu Amida Butsu.*

A ladder enables the pilgrim to ascend into the interior of the colossus as high as the shoulders, in which are two little windows commanding a wide prospect of the grounds; while a priest, who acts as guide, states the age of the statue to be six hundred and thirty years, and asks for some small contribution to aid in the erection of a new temple to shelter it from the weather.

For this Buddha once had a temple. A tidal wave following an earthquake swept walls and roof away, but

left the mighty Amida unmoved, still meditating upon his lotus.

XII.

And we arrive before the far-famed Kamakura temple of Kwannon,—Kwannon, who yielded up her right to the Eternal Peace that she might save the souls of men, and renounced Nirvana to suffer with humanity for other myriad million ages, Kwannon, the Goddess of Pity and of Mercy.

I climb three flights of steps leading to the temple, and a young girl, seated at the threshold, rises to greet us. Then she disappears within the temple to summon the guardian priest, a venerable man, white-robed, who makes me a sign to enter.

The temple is large as any that I have yet seen, and, like the others, grey with the wearing of six hundred years. From the roof there hang down votive offerings, inscriptions, and lanterns in multitude, painted with various pleasing colours. Almost opposite to the entrance is a singular statue, a seated figure, of human dimensions and most human aspect, looking upon us with small weird eyes set in a wondrously wrinkled face. This face was originally painted flesh-tint, and the robes of the image pale blue; but now the whole is uniformly grey with age and dust, and its colourlessness harmonises so well with the senility of the figure that one is almost ready to believe oneself gazing at a living mendicant pilgrim. It is Benzuru, the same personage whose famous image of Asakusa has been made featureless by the wearing touch at countless pilgrim fingers. To left and right of the entrance are the Ni-Ō, enormously muscled, furious of aspect; their crimson bodies are speckled with a white scum of paper

pellets spat at them by worshippers. Above the altar is a small but very pleasing image of Kwannon, with her entire figure relieved against an oblong halo of gold, imitating the flickering of flame.

But this is not the image for which the temple is famed; there is another to be seen upon certain conditions. The old priest presents me with a petition, written in excellent and eloquent English, praying visitors to contribute something to the maintenance of the temple and its pontiff, and appealing to those of another faith to remember that "any belief which can make men kindly and good is worthy of respect." I contribute my mite, and I ask to see the great Kwannon.

Then the old priest lights a lantern, and leads the way, through a low doorway on the left of the altar, into the interior of the temple, into some very lofty darkness. I follow him cautiously awhile, discerning nothing whatever but the flicker of the lantern; then we halt before something which gleams. A moment, and my eyes, becoming more accustomed to the darkness, begin to distinguish outlines; the gleaming object defines itself gradually as a Foot, an immense golden Foot, and I perceive the hem of a golden robe undulating over the instep. Now the other foot appears; the figure is certainly standing. I can perceive that we are in a narrow but also very lofty chamber, and that out of some mysterious blackness overhead ropes are dangling down into the circle of lantern-light illuminating the golden feet. The priest lights two more lanterns, and suspends them upon hooks attached to a pair of pendent ropes about a yard apart; then he pulls up both together slowly. More of the golden robe is revealed as the lanterns ascend, swinging on their way; then the outlines of two mighty knees; then the curving

of columnar thighs under chiselled drapery, and, as with the still waving ascent of the lanterns the golden Vision towers ever higher through the gloom, expectation intensifies. There is no sound but the sound of the invisible pulleys overhead, which squeak like bats. Now above the golden girdle, the suggestion of a bosom. Then the glowing of a golden hand uplifted in benediction. Then another golden hand holding a lotus. And at last a Face, golden, smiling with eternal youth and infinite tenderness, the face of Kwannon.

So revealed out of the consecrated darkness, this ideal of divine feminity—creation of a forgotten art and time—is more than impressive. I can scarcely call the emotion which it produces admiration; it is rather reverence.

But the lanterns, which paused awhile at the level of the beautiful face, now ascend still higher, with a fresh squeaking of pulleys. And lo! the tiara of the divinity appears, with strangest symbolism. It is a pyramid of heads, of faces, charming faces of maidens, miniature faces of Kwannon herself.

For this is the Kwannon of the Eleven Faces, —Jiu-ichi-men-Kwannon.

XIII.

Most sacred this statue is held; and this is its legend.

In the reign of Emperor Gensei, there lived in the province of Yamato a Buddhist priest, Tokudo Shōnin, who had been in a previous birth Hoki Bosatsu, but had been reborn among common men to save their souls. Now at that time, in a valley in Yamato, Tokudo Shonin, walking by night, saw a wonderful radiance; and going toward it found that it came from the trunk of a great fallen tree, a kusunoki, or camphor-tree. A delicious per-

fume came from the tree, and the shining of it was like the shining of the moon. And by these signs Tokudo Shōnin knew that the wood was holy; and he bethought him that he should have the statue of Kwannon carved from it. And he recited a sutra, and repeated the Nenbutsu, praying for inspiration; and even while he prayed there came and stood before him an aged man and an aged woman; and these said to him, "We know that your desire is to have the image of Kwannon-Sama carved from this tree with the help of Heaven; continue therefore, to pray, and we shall carve the statue."

And Tokudo Shōnin did as they bade him; and he saw them easily split the vast trunk into two equal parts, and begin to carve each of the parts into an image. And he saw them so labour for three days; and on the third day the work was done,—and he saw the two marvellous statues of Kwannon made perfect before him. And he said to the strangers: "Tell me, I pray you, by what names you are known." Then the old man answered: "I am Kasuga Myōjin." And the woman answered: "I am called Ten-shō-kō-dai-jin; I am the Goddess of the Sun." And as they spoke both became transfigured and ascended to heaven and vanished from the sight of Tokudo Shōnin.*

And the Emperor, hearing of these happenings, sent his representative to Yamato to make offerings, and to have

* This old legend has peculiar interest as an example of the efforts made by Buddhism to absorb the Shinto divinities, as it had already absorbed those of India and of China. These efforts were, to a great extent, successful prior to the disestablishment of Buddhism and the revival of Shintō as the state religion. But in Izumo, and other parts of western Japan, Shintō has always remained dominant, and has even appropriated and amalgamated much belonging to Buddhism.

a temple built. Also the great priest, Gyōgi-Bosatsu, came and consecrated the images, and dedicated the temple which by order of the Emperor was built. And one of the statues he placed in the temple, enshrining it, and commanding it: "Stay thou here always to save all living creatures!" But the other statue he cast into the sea, saying to it: "Go thou whithersoever it is best, to save all the living."

Now the statue floated to Kamakura. And there arriving by night it shed a great radiance all about it as if there were sunshine upon the sea; and the fishermen of Kamakura were awakened by the great light; and they went out in boats, and found the statue floating and brought it to shore. And the Emperor ordered that a temple should be built for it, the temple called Shinhasidera, on the mountain called Kaiko-San, at Kamakura.

XIV.

As we leave the temple of Kwannon behind us, there are no more dwellings visible along the road; the green slopes to left and right become steeper, and the shadows of the great trees deepen over us. But still, at intervals, some flight of venerable mossy steps, a carven Buddhist gateway, or a lofty torii, signals the presence of sanctuaries we have no time to visit: countless crumbling shrines are all around us, dumb witnesses to the antique splendour and vastness of the dead capital; and everywhere, mingled with perfume of blossoms, hovers the sweet, resinous smell of Japanese incense. Betimes we pass a scattered multitude of sculptured stones, like segments of four-sided pillars, — old haka, the forgotten tombs of a long-abandoned cemetery; or the solitary image of some Buddhist deity,— a dreaming Amida or faintly smiling Kwannon. All are

ancient, time-discoloured, mutilated; a few have been weather-worn into unrecognisability. I halt a moment to contemplate something pathetic, a group of six images of the charming divinity who cares for the ghosts of little children,—the Roku-Jizō. Oh, how chipped and scurfed and mossed they are! Five stand buried almost up to their shoulders in a heaping of little stones, testifying to the prayers of generations; and votive yodarekake, infant bibs of divers colours, have been put about the necks of these for the love of children lost. But one of the gentle god's images lies shattered and overthrown in its own scattered pebble-pile, —broken perhaps by some passing waggon.

XV.

The road slopes before us as we go, sinks down between cliffs steep as the walls of a cañon, and curves. Suddenly we emerge from the cliffs, and reach the sea. It is blue like the unclouded sky, —a soft dreamy blue.

And our path turns sharply to the right, and winds along cliff-summits overlooking a broad beach of dun-coloured sand; and the sea wind blows deliciously with a sweet saline scent, urging the lungs to fill themselves to the very utmost; and far away before me, I perceive a beautiful high green mass, an island foliage-covered, rising out of the water about a quarter of a mile from the main land, —Enoshima, the holy island, sacred to the goddess of the sea, the goddess of beauty. I can already distinguish a tiny town, grey-sprinkling its steep slope. Evidently it can be reached to day on foot, for the tide is out, and has left bare a long broad reach of sand, extending to it, from the opposite village which we are approaching, like a causeway.

At Katase, the little settlement facing the island, we must leave our jinrikisha and walk; the dunes between the village and the beach are too deep to pull the vehicle over. Scores of other jinrikisha are waiting here in the little narrow street for pilgrims who have preceded me. But to-day, I am told, I am the only European who visits the shrine of Benten.

Our two men lead the way over the dunes, and we soon descend upon damp firm sand.

As we near the island the architectural details of the little town define delightfully through the faint sea-haze,—curved bluish sweeps of fantastic roofs, angles of airy balconies, high-peaked curious gables, all above a fluttering of queerly shaped banners covered with mysterious lettering. We pass the sand-flats; and the ever-open Portal of the Sea-city, the City of the Dragon goddess, is before us, a beautiful torii. All of bronze it is, with shimenawa of bronze above it, and a brazen tablet inscribed with characters declaring: "*This is the Palace of the Goddess of Enoshima.*" About the bases of the ponderous pillars are strange designs in *relievo*, eddyings of waves with tortoises struggling in the flow. This is really the gate of the city, facing the shrine of Benten by the land approach; but it is only the third torii of the imposing series through Katase: we did not see the others, having come by way of the coast.

And lo! we are in Enoshima. High before us slopes the single street, a street of broad steps, a street shadowy, full of multi-coloured flags and dark blue drapery dashed with white fantasticalities, which are words, fluttered by the sea wind. It is lined with taverns and miniature shops. At every one I must pause to look; and to dare

to look at anything in Japan is to want to buy it. So I buy, and buy, and buy!

For verily 'tis the City of Mother-of-Pearl, this Enoshima. In every shop, behind the lettered draperies there are miracles of shell-work for sale at absurdly small prices. The glazed cases laid flat upon the matted platforms, the shelved cabinets set against the walls, are all opalescent with nacreous things,—extraordinary surprises, incredible ingenuities: strings of mother-of-pearl fish, strings of mother-of-pearl birds, all shimmering with rainbow colours. There are little kittens of mother-of-pearl, and little foxes of mother-of-pearl, and little puppies of mother-of-pearl, and girls' hair-combs, and cigarette-holders, and pipes too beautiful to use. There are little tortoises, not larger than a shilling, made of shells, that, when you touch them, however lightly, begin to move head, legs, and tail, all at the same time, alternately withdrawing or protruding their limbs so much like real tortoises as to give one a shock of surprise. There are storks and birds, and beetles and butterflies, and crabs and lobsters, made so cunningly of shells, that only touch convinces you they are not alive. There are bees of shell, poised on flowers of the same material,—poised on wire in such a way that they seem to buzz if moved only with the tip of a feather. There is shell work jewelry indescribable, things that Japanese girls love, enchantments in mother-of pearl, hair pins carven in a hundred forms, brooches, necklaces. And there are photographs of Enoshima.

XVI.

This curious street ends at another torii, a wooden torii, with a steeper flight of stone steps ascending to it.

At the foot of the steps are votive stone lamps and a little well, and a stone tank at which all pilgrims wash their hands and rinse their mouths before approaching the temples of the gods. And hanging beside the tank are bright blue towels, with large white Chinese characters upon them. I ask Akira what these characters signify:—

"*Ho-Keng* is the sound of the characters in the Chinese; but in Japanese the same characters are pronounced *Kenjitatematsuru*, and signify that those towels are most humbly offered to Benten. They are what you call votive offerings. And there are many kinds of votive offerings made to famous shrines. Some people give towels, some give pictures, some give vases; some offer lanterns of paper, or bronze, or stone. It is common to promise such offerings when making petitions to the gods; and it is usual to promise a torii. The torii may be small or great according to the wealth of him who gives it; the very rich pilgrim may offer to the gods a torii of metal, such as that below, which is the Gate of Enoshima."

"Akira, do the Japanese always keep their vows to the gods?"

Akira smiles a sweet smile, and answers:—

"There was a man who promised to build a torii of good metal if his prayers were granted. And he obtained all that he desired. And then he built a torii with three exceedingly small needles."

XVII.

Ascending the steps, we reach a terrace, overlooking all the city roofs. There are Buddhist lions of stone and stone lanterns, mossed and chipped, on either side the

torii; and the background of the terrace is the sacred hill, covered with foliage. To the left is a balustrade of stone, old and green, surrounding a shallow pool covered with scum of water-weed. And on the farther bank above it, out of the bushes, protrudes a strangely shaped stone slab, poised on edge, and covered with Chinese characters. It is a sacred stone, and is believed to have the form of a great frog, gama; wherefore it is called Gama-ishi, the Frog-stone. Here and there along the edge of the terrace are other graven monuments, one of which is the offering of certain pilgrims who visited the shrine of the sea-goddess one hundred times. On the right other flights of steps lead to loftier terraces; and an old man, who sits at the foot of them, making bird-cages of bamboo, offers himself as guide.

We follow him to the next terrace, where there is a school for the children of Enoshima, and another sacred stone, huge and shapeless: Fuku-ishi, the Stone of Good Fortune. In old times pilgrims who rubbed their hands upon it believed they would thereby gain riches; and the stone is polished and worn by the touch of innumerable palms.

More steps and more green-mossed lions and lanterns, and another terrace with a little temple in its midst, the first shrine of Benten. Before it a few stunted palm trees are growing. There is nothing in the shrine of interest, only Shinto emblems. But there is another well beside it with other votive towels, and there is another mysterious monument, a stone shrine brought from China six hundred years ago. Perhaps it contained some far-famed statue before this place of pilgrimage was given over to the priests of Shintō. There is nothing in it now; the monolith slab forming the back of it has been frac-

tured by the falling of rocks from the cliff above: and the inscription cut therein has been almost effaced by some kind of scum. Akira reads "*Dai-Nippon-goku-Enoshima-no-reiseki-ken . . .;*" the rest is undecipherable. He says there is a statue in the neighbouring temple, but it is exhibited only once a year, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month.

Leaving the court by a rising path to the left, we proceed along the verge of a cliff overlooking the sea. Perched upon this verge are pretty tea-houses, all widely open to the sea wind, so that, looking through them, over their matted floors and lacquered balconies one sees the ocean as in a picture frame, and the pale clear horizon specked with snowy sails, and a faint blue-peaked shape also, like a phantom island, the far vapoury silhouette of Oshima. Then we find another torii, and other steps leading to a terrace almost black with shade of enormous evergreen trees, and surrounded on the sea side by another stone balustrade, velveted with moss. On the right more steps, another torii, another terrace; and more mossed green lions and stone lamps; and a monument inscribed with the record of the change whereby Enoshima passed away from Buddhism to become Shinto. Beyond, in the centre of another plateau, the second shrine of Benten.

But there is no Benten! Benten has been hidden away by Shinto hands. The second shrine is void as the first. Nevertheless, in a building to the left of the temple, strange relics are exhibited. Feudal armour; suits of plate and chain mail; helmets with visors which are demoniac masks of iron; helmets crested with dragons of gold; two-handed swords worthy of giants; and enormous arrows, more than five feet long, with shafts nearly an inch in diameter. One has a crescent head about nine inches

from horn to horn, the interior edge of the crescent being sharp as a knife. Such a missile would take off a man's head; and I can scarcely believe Akira's assurance that such ponderous arrows were shot from a bow by hand only. There is a specimen of the writing of Nichiren, the great Buddhist priest,—gold characters on a blue ground; and there is, in a lacquered shrine, a gilded dragon said to have been made by that still greater priest and writer and master-wizard, Kōbōdaishi.

A path shaded by overarching trees leads from this plateau to the third shrine. We pass a torii and beyond it come to a stone monument covered with figures of monkeys chiselled in relief. What the signification of this monument is, even our guide cannot explain. Then another torii. It is of wood; but I am told it replaces one of metal, stolen in the night by thieves. Wonderful thieves! that torii must have weighed at least a ton! More stone lanterns; then an immense court, on the very summit of the mountain, and there, in its midst, the third and chief temple of Benten. And before the temple is a large vacant space surrounded by a fence in such manner as to render the shrine totally inaccessible. Vanity and vexation of spirit!

There is, however, a little haiden, or place of prayer, with nothing in it but a money-box and a bell, before the fence, and facing the temple steps. Here the pilgrims make their offerings and pray. Only a small raised platform covered with a Chinese roof supported upon four plain posts, the back of the structure being closed by a lattice about breast high. From this praying-station we can look into the temple of Benten, and see that Benten is not there.

But I perceive that the ceiling is arranged in caissons;

and in a central caisson I discover a very curious painting,—a foreshortened Tortoise, gazing down at me. And while I am looking at it I hear Akira and the guide laughing; and the latter exclaims, "*Benten-Sama!*"

A beautiful little damask snake is undulating up the lattice-work, poking its head through betimes to look at us. It does not seem in the least afraid, nor has it much reason to be, seeing that its kind are deemed the servants and confidants of Benten. Sometimes the great goddess herself assumes the serpent-form; perhaps she has come to see us.

Near by is a singular stone, set on a pedestal in the court. It has the form of the body of a tortoise, and markings like those of the creature's shell; and it is held a sacred thing, and is called the Tortoise-stone. But I fear exceedingly that in all this place we shall find nothing save stones and serpents!

XVIII.

Now we are going to visit the Dragon cavern, not so called, Akira says, because the Dragon of Benten ever dwelt therein, but because the shape of the cavern is the shape of a dragon. The path descends toward the opposite side of the island, and suddenly breaks into a flight of steps cut out of the pale hard rock,—exceedingly steep, and worn, and slippery, and perilous,—overlooking the sea. A vision of low pale rocks, and surf bursting among them, and a tōrō or votive stone lamp in the centre of them,—all seen as in a bird's eye-view, over the verge of an awful precipice. I see also deep, round holes in one of the rocks. There used to be a tea-house below; and the wooden pillars supporting it were fitted into those holes.

I descend with caution; the Japanese seldom slip in their straw sandals, but I can only proceed with the aid of the guide. At almost every step I slip. Surely these steps could never have been thus worn away by the straw sandals of pilgrims who came to see only stones and serpents!

At last we reach a plank gallery carried along the face of the cliff above the rocks and pools, and following it round a projection of the cliff enter the sacred cave. The light dims as we advance; and the sea-waves, running after us into the gloom, make a stupefying roar, multiplied by the extraordinary echo. Looking back, I see the mouth of the cavern like a prodigious sharply angled rent in blackness, showing a fragment of azure sky.

We reach a shrine with no deity in it, pay a fee; and lamps being lighted and given to each of us, we proceed to explore a series of underground passages. So black they are that even with the light of three lamps, I can at first see nothing. In awhile, however, I can distinguish stone figures in relief,—chiselled on slabs like those I saw in the Buddhist graveyard. These are placed at regular intervals along the rock walls. The guide approaches his light to the face of each one, and utters a name, "Daikoku-Sama," "Fudō-Sama," "Kwannon Sama." Sometimes in lieu of a statue there is an empty shrine only, with a money-box before it; and these void shrines have names of Shintō gods, "Daijingu," "Hachiman," "Inari-Sama." All the statues are black, or seem black in the yellow lamplight, and sparkle as if frosted. I feel as if I were in some mortuary pit, some subterranean burial-place of dead gods. Interminable the corridor appears; yet there is at last an end, —an end with a shrine in it,—where the rocky ceiling descends so low that to

reach the shrine one must go down on hands and knees. And there is nothing in the shrine. This is the Tail of the Dragon.

We do not return to the light at once, but enter into other lateral black corridors—the Wings of the Dragon. More sable effigies of dispossessed gods; more empty shrines; more stone faces covered with saltpetre; and more money-boxes, possible only to reach by stooping, where more offerings should be made. And there is no Benten, either of wood or stone.

I am glad to return to the light. Here our guide strips naked, and suddenly leaps head foremost into a black deep swirling current between rocks. Five minutes later he reappears, and clambering out lays at my feet a living, squirming sea-snail and an enormous shrimp. Then he resumes his robe, and we reascend the mountain.

XIX.

"And this," the reader may say,—"this is all that you went forth to see: a torii, some shells, a small damask snake, some stones?"

It is true. And nevertheless I know that I am bewitched. There is a charm indefinable about the place,—that sort of charm which comes with a little ghostly thrill never to be forgotten.

Not of strange sights alone is this charm made, but of numberless subtle sensations and ideas interwoven and interblended: the sweet sharp scents of grove and sea; the blood brightening, vivifying touch of the free wind; the dumb appeal of ancient mystic mossy things; vague reverence evoked by knowledge of treading soil called

holy for a thousand years; and a sense of sympathy, as a human duty, compelled by the vision of steps of rock worn down into shapelessness by the pilgrim feet of vanished generations.

And other memories ineffaceable: the first sight of the sea-girt City of Pearl through a fairy veil of haze; the windy approach to the lovely island over the velvety soundless brown stretch of sand; the weird majesty of the giant gate of bronze; the queer, high-sloping, fantastic, quaintly gabled street, flinging down sharp shadows of aerial balconies; the flutter of coloured draperies in the sea wind, and of flags with their riddles of lettering; the pearly glimmering of the astonishing shops.

And impressions of the enormous day,—the day of the Land of the Gods,—a loftier day than ever our summers know; and the glory of the view from those green sacred silent heights between sea and sun; and the remembrance of the sky, a sky spiritual as holiness, a sky with clouds ghost-pure and white as the light itself,—seeming, indeed, not clouds but dreams, or souls of Bodhisattvas about to melt forever into some blue Nirvana.

And the romance of Benten, too,—the Deity of Beauty, the Divinity of Love, the Goddess of Eloquence. Rightly is she likewise named Goddess of the Sea. For is not the Sea most ancient and most excellent of Speakers, —the eternal Poet, chanter of that mystic hymn whose rhythm shakes the world, whose mighty syllables no man may learn?

XX.

We return by another route.

For awhile the way winds through a long narrow winding valley between wooded hills: the whole extent of

bottom-land is occupied by rice-farms; the air has a humid coolness, and one hears only the chanting of frogs, like a clattering of countless castanets, as the jinrikisha jolts over the rugged elevated paths separating the flooded rice-fields.

As we skirt the foot of a wooded hill upon the right, my Japanese comrade signals to our runners to halt, and himself dismounting, points to the blue-peaked roof of a little temple high-perched on the green slope. "Is it really worth while to climb up there in the sun?" I ask. "Oh, yes!" he answers: "it is the temple of Kishibojin,—Kishibojin, the Mother of Demons!"

We ascend a flight of broad stone steps, meet the Buddhist guardian lions at the summit, and enter the little court in which the temple stands. An elderly woman, with a child clinging to her robe, comes from the adjoining building to open the screens for us; and taking off our footgear we enter the temple. Without, the edifice looked old and dingy; but within all is neat and pretty. The June sun, pouring through the open shōji, illuminates an artistic confusion of brasses gracefully shaped and multi coloured things,—images, lanterns, paintings, gilded inscriptions, pendent scrolls. There are three altars.

Above the central altar Amida Buddha sits enthroned on his mystic golden lotus in the attitude of the Teacher. On the altar to the right gleams a shrine of five miniature golden steps, where little images stand in rows, tier above tier, some seated, some erect, male and female, attired like goddesses or like daimyō: the Sanjiubanjin, or Thirty Guardians. Below, on the façade of the altar, is the figure of a hero slaying a monster. On the altar to the left is the shrine of the Mother-of-Demons.

Her story is a legend of horror. For some sin committed in a previous birth, she was born a demon, devouring her own children. But being saved by the teaching of Buddha, she became a divine being, especially loving and protecting infants; and Japanese mothers pray to her for their little ones, and wives pray to her for beautiful boys.

The face of Kishibojin* is the face of a comely woman. But her eyes are weird. In her right hand she bears a lotus-blossom; with her left she supports in a fold of her robe, against her half-veiled breast, a naked baby. At the foot of her shrine stands Jizō-Sama, leaning upon his shakujō. But the altar and its images do not form the startling feature of the temple-interior. What impresses the visitor in a totally novel way are the votive offerings. High before the shrine, suspended from strings stretched taut between tall poles of bamboo, are scores, no, hundreds, of pretty tiny dresses,—Japanese baby-dresses of many colours. Most are made of poor material, for these are the thank-offerings of very poor simple women, poor country mothers, whose prayers to Kishibojin for the blessing of children have been heard.

And the sight of all those little dresses, each telling so naïvely its story of joy and pain,—those tiny kimono shaped and sewn by docile patient fingers of humble mothers,—touches irresistibly, like some unexpected revelation of the universal mother-love. And the tenderness of all the simple hearts that have testified thus to faith and thankfulness seems to thrill all about me softly, like a caress of summer wind.

Outside the world appears to have suddenly grown

* In Sanscrit "*Harîti.*"—*Kariteï-Bo* is the Japanese name for one form of Kishibojin.

beautiful; the light is sweeter; it seems to me there is a new charm even in the azure of the eternal day.

XXI.

Then, having traversed the valley, we reach a main road so level and so magnificently shaded by huge old trees that I could believe myself in an English lane,—a lane in Kent or Surrey, perhaps,—but for some exotic detail breaking the illusion at intervals; a torii, towering before temple-steps descending to the highway, or a sign-board lettered with Chinese characters, or the wayside shrine of some unknown god.

All at once I observe by the roadside some unfamiliar sculptures in relief,—a row of chiselled slabs protected by a little bamboo shed; and I dismount to look at them, supposing them to be funereal monuments. They are so old that the lines of their sculpturing are half obliterated; their feet are covered with moss, and their visages are half effaced. But I can discern that these are not haka, but six images of one divinity; and my guide knows him, Koshin, the God of Roads. So chipped and covered with scurf he is, that the upper portion of his form has become indefinably vague; his attributes have been worn away. But below his feet, on several slabs, chiselled cunningly, I can still distinguish the figures of the Three Apes, his messengers. And some pious soul has left before one image an humble votive offering,—the picture of a black cock and a white hen, painted upon a wooden shingle. It must have been left here very long ago; the wood has become almost black, and the painting has been damaged by weather and by the droppings of birds. There are no stones piled at the feet of these images, as before the images of Jizō; they seem like things forgotten, crusted

over by the neglect of generations,—archaic gods who have lost their worshippers.

But my guide tells me, "The Temple of Kōshin is near, in the village of Fujisawa." Assuredly I must visit it.

XXII.

The temple of Kōshin is situated in the middle of the village, in a court opening upon the main street. A very old wooden temple it is, unpainted, dilapidated, grey with the greyness of all forgotten and weather-beaten things. It is some time before the guardian of the temple can be found, to open the doors. For this temple has doors in lieu of shōji,—old doors that moan sleepily at being turned upon their hinges. And it is not necessary to remove one's shoes; the floor is matless, covered with dust, and squeaks under the unaccustomed weight of entering feet. All within is crumbling, mouldering, worn; the shrine has no image, only Shintō emblems, some poor paper lanterns whose once bright colours have vanished under a coating of dust, some vague inscriptions. I see the circular frame of a metal mirror; but the mirror itself is gone. Whither? The guardian says: "No priest lives now in this temple; and thieves might come in the night to steal the mirror; so we have hidden it away." I ask about the image of Kōshin. He answers it is exposed but once in every sixty-one years: so I cannot see it; but there are other statues of the god in the temple court.

I go to look at them: a row of images, much like those upon the public highway, but better preserved. One figure of Kōshin, however, is different from the others I have seen,—apparently made after some Hindoo model, judging by the Indian coiffure, mitre-shaped and lofty. The god has three eyes; one in the centre of his fore-

head, opening perpendicularly instead of horizontally. He has six arms. With one hand he supports a monkey; with another he grasps a serpent; and the other hands hold out symbolic things,—a wheel, a sword, a rosary, a sceptre. And serpents are coiled about his wrists and about his ankles; and under his feet is a monstrous head, the head of a demon, Amanjako, sometimes called Utatesa ("Sadness"). Upon the pedestal below the Three Apes are carven; and the face of an ape appears also upon the front of the god's tiara.

I see also tablets of stone, graven only with the god's name,—votive offerings. And near by, in a tiny wooden shrine, is the figure of the Earth-god, Ken-ro-ji-jin, grey, primeval, vaguely wrought, holding in one hand a spear, in the other a vessel containing something indistinguishable.

XXIII.

Perhaps to uninitiated eyes these many-headed, many-handed gods at first may seem—as they seem always in the sight of Christian bigotry—only monstrous. But when the knowledge of their meaning comes to one who feels the divine in all religions, then they will be found to make appeal to the higher æstheticism, to the sense of moral beauty, with a force never to be divined by minds knowing nothing of the Orient and its thought. To me the image of Kwannon of the Thousand Hands is not less admirable than any other representation of human loveliness idealised bearing her name,—the Peerless, the Majestic, the Peace-Giving, or even White Sui-Getsu, who sails the moonlit waters in her rosy boat made of a single lotus-petal; and in the triple-headed Shaka I discern and revere the mighty power of that Truth, whereby, as by a

conjunction of suns, the Three Worlds have been illuminated.

But vain to seek to memorise the names and attributes of all the gods; they seem, self-multiplying, to mock the seeker; Kwannon the Merciful, is revealed as the Hundred Kwannon; the Six Jizō become the Thousand. And as they multiply before research, they vary and change: less multiform, less complex, less elusive the moving of waters than the visions of this Oriental faith. Into it, as into a fathomless sea, mythology after mythology from India and China and the farther East has sunk and been absorbed; and the stranger, peering into its deeps, finds himself, as in the tale of Undine, contemplating a flood in whose every surge rises and vanishes a Face,—weird or beautiful or terrible,—a most ancient shoreless sea of forms incomprehensibly interchanging and intermingling, but symbolising the protean magic of that infinite Unknown that shapes and re-shapes forever all cosmic being.

XXIV.

I wonder if I can buy a picture of Kōshin. In most Japanese temples little pictures of the tutelar deity are sold to pilgrims, cheap prints on thin paper. But the temple guardian here tells me, with a gesture of despair, that there are no pictures of Koshin for sale; there is only an old kakemono on which the god is represented. If I would like to see it he will go home and get it for me. I beg him to do me the favour; and he hurries into the street.

While awaiting his return, I continue to examine the queer old statues, with a feeling of mingled melancholy and pleasure. To have studied and loved an ancient

faith only through the labours of palæographers and archæologists, and as a something astronomically remote from one's own existence, and then suddenly in after years to find the same faith a part of one's human environment,—to feel that its mythology, though senescent, is *alive* all around you,—is almost to realise the dream of the Romantics, to have the sensation of returning through twenty centuries into the life of a happier world. For these quaint Gods of Roads and Gods of Earth are really living still, though so worn and mossed and feebly worshipped. In this brief moment, at least, I am really in the Elder World,—perhaps just at that epoch of it when the primal faith is growing a little old-fashioned, crumbling slowly before the corrosive influence of a new philosophy; and I know myself a pagan still, loving these simple old gods, these gods of a people's childhood.

And they need some human love, these naïve, innocent, ugly gods. The beautiful divinities will live forever by that sweetness of womanhood idealised in the Buddhist art of them: eternal are Kwannon and Benten; they need no help of man; they will compel reverence when the great temples shall all have become voiceless and priestless as this shrine of Koshin is. But these kind, queer, artless, mouldering gods, who have given ease to so many troubled minds, who have gladdened so many simple hearts, who have heard so many innocent prayers,—how gladly would I prolong their beneficent lives in spite of the so-called "laws of progress" and the irrefutable philosophy of evolution!

The guardian returns, bringing with him a kakemono, very small, very dusty, and so yellow-stained by time that

it might be a thousand years old. But I am disappointed as I unroll it; there is only a very common print of the god within,—all outline. And while I am looking at it, I become for the first time conscious that a crowd has gathered about me,—tanned kindly-faced labourers from the fields, and mothers with their babies on their backs, and school-children, and jinrikisha men,—all wondering that a stranger should be thus interested in their gods. And although the pressure about me is very, very gentle, like a pressure of tepid water for gentleness, I feel a little embarrassed. I give back the old kakemono to the guardian, make my offering to the god, and take my leave of Kōshin and his good servant.

All the kind oblique eyes follow me as I go. And something like a feeling of remorse seizes me at thus abruptly abandoning the void, dusty, crumbling temple, with its mirrorless altar and its colourless lanterns, and the decaying sculptures of its neglected court, and its kindly guardian whom I see still watching my retreating steps, with the yellow kakemono in his hand. The whistle of a locomotive warns me that I shall just have time to catch the train. For Western civilisation has invaded all this primitive peace, with its webs of steel, with its ways of iron. This is not of thy roads, O Koshin!—the old gods are dying along its ash-strewn verge!

III.

AT THE MARKET OF THE DEAD.

I.

It is just past five o'clock in the afternoon. Through the open door of my little study the rising breeze of evening is beginning to disturb the papers on my desk, and the white fire of the Japanese sun is taking that pale amber tone which tells that the heat of the day is over. There is not a cloud in the blue,—not even one of those beautiful white filamentary things, like ghosts of silken floss, which usually swim in this most ethereal of earthly skies even in the driest weather.

A sudden shadow at the door. Akira, the young Buddhist student, stands at the threshold slipping his white feet out of his sandal thongs preparatory to entering, and smiling like the god Jizō.

"Ah! komban, Akira."

"To night," says Akira, seating himself upon the floor in the posture of Buddha upon the Lotus, "the Bon-ichi will be held. Perhaps you would like to see it?"

"Oh, Akira, all things in this country I should like to see. But tell me, I pray you, unto what may the Bon-ichi be likened?"

"The Bon-ichi," answers Akira, "is a market at which will be sold all things required for the Festival of the Dead; and the Festival of the Dead will begin to morrow,

when all the altars of the temples and all the shrines in the homes of good Buddhists will be made beautiful."

"Then I want to see the Bon-ichi, Akira, and I should also like to see a Buddhist shrine,—a household shrine."

"Yes, will you come to my room?" asks Akira. "It is not far,—in the Street of the Aged Men, beyond the Street of the Stony River, and near to the Street Everlasting. There is a butsuma there,—a household shrine, —and on the way I will tell you about the Bonku."

So, for the first time, I learn those things—which I am now about to write.

II.

From the 13th to the 15th day of July is held the Festival of the Dead,—the Bommatsuri or Bonku,—by some Europeans called the Feast of Lanterns. But in many places there are two such festivals annually; for those who still follow the ancient reckoning of time by moons hold that the Bommatsuri should fall on the 13th, 14th, and 15th days of the seventh month of the antique calendar, which corresponds to a later period of the year.

Early on the morning of the 13th, new mats of purest rice straw, woven expressly for the festival, are spread upon all Buddhist altars and within each butsuma or butsudan,—the little shrine before which the morning and evening prayers are offered up in every believing home. Shrines and altars are likewise decorated with beautiful embellishments of coloured paper, and with flowers and sprigs of certain hallowed plants,—always real lotus-flowers when obtainable, otherwise lotus-flowers of paper, and fresh branches of shikimi (anise) and of misohagi (lespedeza). Then a tiny lacquered table,—a zen,—such as Japanese meals are usually served upon, is placed upon the altar,

and the food offerings are laid on it. But in the smaller shrines of Japanese homes the offerings are more often simply laid upon the rice matting, wrapped in fresh lotus-leaves.

These offerings consist of the foods called somen, resembling our vermicelli, gozen, which is boiled rice, dango, a sort of tiny dumpling, eggplant, and fruits according to season,—frequently uri and saikwa, slices of melon and watermelon, and plums and peaches. Often sweet cakes and dainties are added. Sometimes the offering is only O-sho-jin-gu (honourable uncooked food); more usually it is O-rio-gu (honourable boiled food); but it never includes, of course, fish, meats, or wine. Clear water is given to the shadowy guest, and is sprinkled from time to time upon the altar or within the shrine with a branch of misohagi; tea is poured out every hour for the viewless visitors, and everything is daintily served up in little plates and cups and bowls, as for living guests, with hashi (chop-sticks) laid beside the offering. So for three days the dead are feasted.

At sunset, pine torches, fixed in the ground before each home, are kindled to guide the spirit-visitors. Sometimes, also, on the first evening of the Bommatsuri, welcome-fires (*mukaebi*) are lighted along the shore of the sea or lake or river by which the village or city is situated, —neither more nor less than one hundred and eight fires; this number having some mystic signification in the philosophy of Buddhism. And charming lanterns are suspended each night at the entrances of homes,—the Lanterns of the Festival of the Dead,—lanterns of special forms and colours, beautifully painted with suggestions of landscape and shapes of flowers, and always decorated with a peculiar fringe of paper streamers.

Also, on the same night, those who have dead friends go to the cemeteries and make offerings there, and pray, and burn incense, and pour out water for the ghosts. Flowers are placed there in the bamboo vases set beside each haka, and lanterns are lighted and hung up before the tombs, but these lanterns have no designs upon them.

At sunset on the evening of the 15th only the offerings called Segaki are made in the temples. Then are fed the ghosts of the Circle of Penance, called Gakidō, the place of hungry spirits; and then also are fed by the priests those ghosts having no other friends among the living to care for them. Very, very small these offerings are,—like the offerings to the gods.

III.

Now this, Akira tells me, is the origin of the Segaki, as the same is related in the holy book Busetsuuranbongyo:—

Dai-Mokenren, the great disciple of Buddha, obtained by merit the Six Supernatural Powers. And by virtue of them it was given him to see the soul of his mother in the Gakidō,—the world of spirits doomed to suffer hunger in expiation of faults committed in a previous life. Mokenren saw that his mother suffered much; he grieved exceedingly because of her pain, and he filled a bowl with choicest food and sent it to her. He saw her try to eat; but each time that she tried to lift the food to her lips it would change into fire and burning embers, so that she could not eat. Then Mokenren asked the Teacher what he could do to relieve his mother from pain. And the Teacher made answer: "On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, feed the ghosts of the great priests of all countries." And Mokenren, having done so, saw that his mother was

freed from the state of gaki, and that she was dancing for joy.* This is the origin also of the dances called Bon-odori, which are danced on the third night of the Festival of the Dead throughout Japan.

Upon the third and last night there is a weirdly beautiful ceremony, more touching than that of the Segaki, stranger than the Bon-odori,—the ceremony of farewell. All that the living may do to please the dead has been done; the time allotted by the powers of the unseen worlds unto the ghostly visitants is well-nigh past, and their friends must send them all back again.

Everything has been prepared for them. In each home small boats made of barley straw closely woven have been freighted with supplies of choice food, with tiny lanterns, and written messages of faith and love. Seldom more than two feet in length are these boats; but the dead require little room. And the frail craft are launched on canal, lake, sea, or river,— each with a miniature lantern glowing at the prow, and incense burning at the stern. And if the night be fair, they voyage long. Down all the creeks and rivers and canals the phantom fleets go glimmering to the sea; and all the sea sparkles to the horizon with the lights of the dead, and the sea wind is fragrant with incense.

But alas! it is now forbidden in the great seaports to launch the shōryōbune, "the boats of the blessed ghosts."

IV.

It is so narrow, the Street of the Aged Men, that by

* It is related in the same book that Ananda having asked the Buddha how came Mokenren's mother to suffer in the Gakidō, the Teacher replied that in a previous incarnation she had refused, through cupidity, to feed certain visiting priests.

stretching out one's arms one can touch the figured sign-draperies before its tiny shops on both sides at once. And these little ark-shaped houses really seem toy-houses; that in which Akira lives is even smaller than the rest, having no shop in it, and no miniature second storey. It is all closed up. Akira slides back the wooden amado which forms the door, and then the paper-paned screens behind it; and the tiny structure, thus opened, with its light unpainted woodwork and painted paper partitions, looks something like a great bird-cage. But the rush matting of the elevated floor is fresh, sweet-smelling, spotless; and as we take off our footgear to mount upon it, I see that all within is neat, curious, and pretty.

"The woman has gone out," says Akira, setting the smoking-box (*hibachi*) in the middle of the floor, and spreading beside it a little mat for me to squat upon.

"But what is this, Akira?" I ask, pointing to a thin board suspended by a ribbon on the wall,—a board so cut from the middle of a branch as to leave the bark along its edges. There are two columns of mysterious signs exquisitely painted upon it.

"Oh, that is a calendar," answers Akira. "On the right side are the names of the months having thirty-one days; on the left, the names of those having less. Now here is a household shrine."

Occupying the alcove, which is an indispensable part of the structure of Japanese guest-rooms, is a native cabinet painted with figures of flying birds; and on this cabinet stands the butsuma. It is a small lacquered and gilded shrine, with little doors modelled after those of a temple gate,—a shrine very quaint, very much dilapidated (one door has lost its hinges), but still a dainty thing despite its crackled lacquer and faded gilding. Akira

opens it with a sort of compassionate smile; and I look inside for the image. There is none; only a wooden tablet with a band of white paper attached to it, bearing Japanese characters,—the name of a dead baby girl,—and a vase of expiring flowers, a tiny print of Kwannon, the Goddess of Mercy, and a cup filled with ashes of incense.

"To-morrow," Akira says, "she will decorate this, and make the offerings of food to the little one."

Hanging from the ceiling, on the opposite side of the room, and in front of the shrine, is a wonderful, charming, funny, wide-and-rosy mask,—the face of a laughing, chubby girl with two mysterious spots upon her forehead, the face of Otafuku.* It twirls round and round in the soft air-current coming through the open shōji; and every time those funny black eyes, half shut with laughter, look at me, I cannot help smiling. And hanging still higher, I see little Shintō emblems of paper (*gohei*), a miniature mitre-shaped cap in likeness of those worn in the sacred dances, a pasteboard emblem of the magic gem (*Nio-i hōjiu*) which the gods bear in their hands, a small Japanese doll, and a little wind-wheel which will spin around with the least puff of air, and other indescribable toys, mostly symbolic, such as are sold on festal days in the courts of the temples,—the playthings of the dead child.

"Komban!" exclaims a very gentle voice behind us. The mother is standing there, smiling as if pleased at the stranger's interest in her butsuma,—a middle-aged woman of the poorest class, not comely, but with a most kindly face. We return her evening greeting; and while I sit

* A deity of good fortune.

down upon the little mat laid before the hibachi, Akira whispers something to her, with the result that a small kettle is at once set to boil over a very small charcoal furnace. We are probably going to have some tea.

As Akira takes his seat before me, on the other side of the hibachi, I ask him:—

"What was the name I saw on the tablet?"

"The name which you saw," he answers, "was not the real name. The real name is written upon the other side. After death another name is given by the priest. A dead boy is called Ryochi Dōji; a dead girl, Mioyo Dōnyo."

While we are speaking, the woman approaches the little shrine, opens it, arranges the objects in it, lights the tiny lamp, and with joined hands and bowed head begins to pray. Totally unembarrassed by our presence and our chatter she seems, as one accustomed to do what is right and beautiful heedless of human opinion; praying with that brave, true frankness which belongs to the poor only of this world,—those simple souls who never have any secret to hide, either from each other or from heaven, and of whom Ruskin nobly said, *"These are our holiest."* I do not know what words her heart is murmuring: I hear only at moments that soft sibilant sound, made by gently drawing the breath through the lips, which among this kind people is a token of humblest desire to please.

As I watch the tender little rite, I become aware of something dimly astir in the mystery of my own life,—vaguely, indefinably familiar, like a memory ancestral, like the revival of a sensation forgotten two thousand years. Blended in some strange way it seems to be with my faint knowledge of an elder world, whose household gods were

also the beloved dead; and there is a weird sweetness in this place, like a shadowing of Lares.

Then, her brief prayer over, she turns to her miniature furnace again. She talks and laughs with Akira; she prepares the tea, pours it out in tiny cups and serves it to us, kneeling in that graceful attitude,—picturesque, traditional,—which for six hundred years has been the attitude of the Japanese woman serving tea. Verily, no small part of the life of the woman of Japan is spent thus in serving little cups of tea. Even as a ghost, she appears in popular prints offering to somebody spectral tea-cups of spectral tea. Of all Japanese ghost-pictures, I know of none more pathetic than that in which the phantom of a woman kneeling humbly offers to her haunted and remorseful murderer a little cup of tea!

"Now let us go to the Bon-ichi," says Akira, rising; "she must go there herself soon, and it is already getting dark. *Sayōnara!*"

It is indeed almost dark as we leave the little house: stars are pointing in the strip of sky above the street; but it is a beautiful night for a walk, with a tepid breeze blowing at intervals, and sending long flutterings through the miles of shop draperies. The market is in the narrow street at the verge of the city, just below the hill where the great Buddhist temple of Zoto-Kuin stands,—in the Motomachi, only ten squares away.

V.

The curious narrow street is one long blaze of lights, —lights of lantern signs, lights of torches and lamps illuminating unfamiliar rows of little stands and booths set

out in the thoroughfare before all the shop-fronts on each side; making two far-converging lines of multi-coloured fire. Between these moves a dense throng, filling the night with a clatter of geta that drowns even the tide-like murmuring of voices and the cries of the merchant. But how gentle the movement!—there is no jostling, no rudeness; everybody, even the weakest and smallest, has a chance to see everything; and there are many things to see.

"Hasu-no-hana!—hasu-no-ha!" Here are the venders of lotus-flowers for the tombs and the altars, of lotus leaves in which to wrap the food of the beloved ghosts. The leaves, folded into bundles, are heaped upon tiny tables; the lotus-flowers, buds and blossoms intermingled, are fixed upright in immense bunches, supported by light frames of bamboo.

"Ogara!—ogara-ya! White sheaves of long peeled rods. These are hemp-sticks. The thinner ends can be broken up into hashi for the use of the ghosts; the rest must be consumed in the mukaebi. Rightly all these sticks should be made of pine; but pine is too scarce and dear for the poor folk of this district, so the ogara are substituted.

"Kawarake!—kawarake-ya!" The dishes of the ghosts: small red shallow platters of unglazed earthenware; primeval pottery wrought after a fashion which now exists only for the dead,—pottery shaped after a tradition older than the religion of Buddha.

"Ya-bondoro-wa-irimasenka?" The lanterns,—the "bon"-lanterns,—which will light the returning feet of the ghosts. All are beautiful. Some are hexagonal, like the lanterns of the great shrines; and some have the form of stars; and some are like great luminous eggs. They are decorated with exquisite paintings of lotus-flowers, and with fringes of paper streamers choicely coloured, or per-

haps broad white paper ribbons in which charming suggestions of lotus-blossoms have been scissored out. And here are dead-white lanterns, round like moons, these are for the cemeteries.

"O-kazari! O-kazari-ya!" The venders of all articles of decoration for the Festival of the Dead. *"Komo-demo! —nandemo!"* Here are the fresh, white mats of rice straw for the butsumas and the altars; and here are the warauma, little horses made out of wisps of straw, for the dead to ride; and the waraushi, little oxen of straw which will do shadowy labour for them. All honourably cheap, —*O-yasui!* Here also are the branches of shikimi for the altars, and sprays of misohagi wherewith to sprinkle water upon the Segaki.

"O-kazari-mono-wa-irimasenka!" Exquisite scarlet and white tassels of strings of rice grains, like finest beadwork; and wonderful paper decorations for the butsuma; and incense-sticks (*senko*) of all varieties, from the commonest, at a couple of cents a bundle, to the extremely dear, at one yen,—long, light, chocolate-coloured, brittle rods, slender as a pencil-lead, each bundle secured by straps of gilded and coloured paper. You take one, light an end, and set the other end upright in a vessel containing soft ashes; it will continue to smoulder, filling the air with fragrance, until wholly consumed.

"Hotaru-ni-kirigisu!—o-kodomo-shu-no-onagusami!—oyasuku-makemasu!" Eh! what is all this? A little booth shaped like a sentry-box, all made of laths, covered with a red-and-white chess pattern of paper; and out of this frail structure issues a shrilling keen as the sound of leaking steam. "Oh, that is only insects," says Akira, laughing; "nothing to do with the Bonku." Insects, yes! —in cages! The shrilling is made by scores of huge

green crickets, each prisoned in a tiny bamboo cage by itself. "They are fed with eggplant and melon rind," continues Akira, "and sold to children to play with." And there are also beautiful little cages full of fireflies,—cages covered with brown mosquito-netting, upon each of which some simple but very pretty design in bright colours has been dashed by a Japanese brush. One cricket and cage, two cents. Fifteen fireflies and cage, five cents.

Here on a street corner squats a blue-robed boy behind a low wooden table, selling wooden boxes about as big as match-boxes, with red paper hinges. Beside the piles of these little boxes on the table are shallow dishes filled with clear water, in which extraordinary thin flat shapes are floating,—shapes of flowers, trees, birds, boats, men, and women. Open a box; it costs only two cents. Inside, wrapped in tissue paper, are bundles of little pale sticks, like round match-sticks, with pink ends. Drop one into the water, it instantly unrolls and expands into the likeness of a lotus-flower. Another transforms itself into a fish. A third becomes a boat. A fourth changes to an owl. A fifth becomes a tea-plant, covered with leaves and blossoms. . . . So delicate are these things that, once immersed, you cannot handle them without breaking them. They are made of seaweed.

"*Tsukuri hana!—tsukuri-hana-wa-irimasenka?*" The sellers of artificial flowers, marvellous chrysanthemums and lotus-plants of paper, imitations of bud and leaf and flower so cunningly wrought that the eye alone cannot detect the beautiful trickery. It is only right that these should cost much more than their living counterparts.

VI.

High above the thronging and the clamour and the

myriad fires of the merchants, the great Shingon temple at the end of the radiant street towers upon its hill against the starry night, weirdly, like a dream,—strangely illuminated by rows of paper lanterns hung all along its curving eaves; and the flowing of the crowd bears me thither. Out of the broad entrance, over a dark gliding mass which I know to be heads and shoulders of crowding worshippers, beams a broad band of yellow light; and before reaching the lion-guarded steps I hear the continuous clanging of the temple gong, each clang the signal of an offering and a prayer. Doubtless a cataract of cash is pouring into the great alms-chest; for to-night is the Festival of Yakushi-Nyorai, the Physician of Souls. Borne to the steps at last, I find myself able to halt a moment, despite the pressure of the throng, before the stand of a lantern-seller selling the most beautiful lanterns that I have ever seen. Each is a gigantic lotus-flower of paper, so perfectly made in every detail as to seem a great living blossom freshly plucked; the petals are crimson at their bases, paling to white at their tips; the calyx is a faultless mimicry of nature, and beneath it hangs a beautiful fringe of paper cuttings, coloured with the colours of the flower, green below the calyx, white in the middle, crimson at the ends. In the heart of the blossom is set a microscopic oil-lamp of baked clay; and this being lighted, all the flower becomes luminous, diaphanous,—a lotus of white and crimson fire. There is a slender gilded wooden hoop by which to hang it up, and the price is four cents! How can people afford to make such things for four cents, even in this country of astounding cheapness?

Akira is trying to tell me something about the hyaku-hachi-no-mukaebi, the Hundred and Eight Fires, to be

lighted to-morrow evening, which bear some figurative relation unto the Hundred and Eight Foolish Desires; but I cannot hear him for the clatter of the geta and the komageta, the wooden clogs and wooden sandals of the worshippers ascending to the shrine of Yakushi-Nyorai. The light straw sandals of the poorer men, the zōri and the waraji, are silent; the great clatter is really made by the delicate feet of women and girls, balancing themselves carefully upon their noisy geta. And most of these little feet are clad with spotless tabi, white as a white lotus. White feet of little blue-robed mothers they mostly are,— mothers climbing patiently and smilingly, with pretty placid babies at their backs, up the hill to Buddha.

And while through the tinted lantern light I wander on with the gentle noisy people, up the great steps of stone, between other displays of lotus-blossoms, between other high hedgerows of paper flowers, my thought suddenly goes back to the little broken shrine in the poor woman's room, with the humble playthings hanging before it, and the laughing, twirling mask of Otafuku. I see the happy, funny little eyes, oblique and silky-shadowed like Otafuku's own, which used to look at those toys,— toys in which the fresh child-senses found a charm that I can but faintly divine, a delight hereditary, ancestral. I see the tender little creature being borne, as it was doubtless borne many times, through just such a peaceful throng as this, in just such a lukewarm, luminous night, peeping over the mother's shoulder, softly clinging at her neck with tiny hands.

Somewhere among this multitude she is,—the mother. She will feel again to-night the faint touch of little hands, yet will not turn her head to look and laugh, as in other days.

IV.

BON-ODORI.

1.

Over the mountains to Izumo, the land of the Kamiyo,* the land of the Ancient Gods. A journey of four days by kuruma, with strong runners, from the Pacific to the Sea of Japan; for we have taken the longest and least frequented route.

Through valleys most of this long route lies, valleys always open to higher valleys, while the road ascends, valleys between mountains with rice-fields ascending their slopes by successions of diked terraces which look like enormous green flights of steps. Above them are shadowing sombre forests of cedar and pine; and above these wooded summits loom indigo shapes of farther hills overtopped by peaked silhouettes of vapory grey. The air is lukewarm and windless; and distances are gauzed by delicate mists; and in this tenderest of blue skies, this Japanese sky which always seems to me loftier than any other sky which I ever saw, there are only, day after day, some few filmy, spectral, diaphanous white wandering things: like ghosts of clouds, riding on the wind.

But sometimes, as the road ascends, the rice-fields disappear awhile: fields of barley and of indigo, and of rye and of cotton, fringe the route for a little space; and

* The period in which only deities existed.

then it plunges into forest shadows. Above all else, the forests of cedar sometimes bordering the way are astonishments; never outside of the tropics did I see any growths comparable for density and perpendicularity with these. Every trunk is straight and bare as a pillar: the whole front presents the spectacle of an immeasurable massing of pallid columns towering up into a cloud of sombre foliage so dense that one can distinguish nothing overhead but branchings lost in shadow. And the profundities beyond the rare gaps in the palisade of blanched trunks are night-black, as in Doré's pictures of fir woods.

No more great towns; only thatched villages nestling in the folds of the hills, each with its Buddhist temple, lifting a tilted roof of blue-grey tiles above the congregation of thatched homesteads, and its miya, or Shintō shrine, with a torii before it like a great ideograph shaped in stone or wood. But Buddhism still dominates; every hilltop has its tera; and the statues of Buddhas or of Bodhisattvas appear by the roadside, as we travel on, with the regularity of mile-stones. Often a village tera is so large that the cottages of the rustic folk about it seem like little out-houses; and the traveller wonders how so costly an edifice of prayer can be supported by a community so humble. And everywhere the signs of the gentle faith appear: its ideographs and symbols are chiselled upon the faces of the rocks; its icons smile upon you from every shadowy recess by the way; even the very landscape betimes would seem to have been moulded by the soul of it, where hills rise softly as a prayer. And the summits of some are domed like the head of Shaka, and the dark bossy frondage that clothes them might seem the clustering of his curls.

But gradually, with the passing of the days, as we

journey into the loftier west, I see fewer and fewer tera. Such Buddhist temples as we pass appear small and poor; and the wayside images become rarer and rarer. But the symbols of Shintō are more numerous, and the structure of its miya larger and loftier. And the torii are visible everywhere, and tower higher, before the approaches to villages, before the entrances of courts guarded by strangely grotesque lions and foxes of stone, and before stairways of old mossed rock, upsloping, between dense growths of ancient cedar and pine, to shrines that moulder in the twilight of holy groves.

At one little village I see, just beyond the torii leading to a great Shintō temple, a particularly odd small shrine, and feel impelled by curiosity to examine it. Leaning against its closed doors are many short gnarled sticks in a row, miniature clubs. Irreverently removing these, and opening the little doors, Akira bids me look within. I see only a mask,—the mask of a goblin, a Tengu, grotesque beyond description, with an enormous nose,—so grotesque that I feel remorse for having looked at it.

The sticks are votive offerings. By dedicating one to the shrine, it is believed that the Tengu may be induced to drive one's enemies away. Goblin-shaped though they appear in all Japanese paintings and carvings of them, the Tengu-Sama are divinities, lesser divinities, lords of the art of fencing and the use of all weapons.

And other changes gradually become manifest. Akira complains that he can no longer understand the language of the people. We are traversing regions of dialects. The houses are also architecturally different from those of the country-folk of the northeast; their high thatched roofs are curiously decorated with bundles of straw fastened to a pole of bamboo parallel with the roof-ridge, and ele-

vated about a foot above it. The complexion of the peasantry is darker than in the northeast; and I see no more of those charming rosy faces one observes among the women of the Tōkyō districts. And the peasants wear different hats, hats pointed like the straw roofs of those little wayside temples curiously enough called *an* (which means a straw hat).

The weather is more than warm, rendering clothing oppressive; and as we pass through the little villages along the road, I see much healthy cleanly nudity: pretty naked children; brown men and boys with only a soft narrow white cloth about their loins, asleep on the matted floors, all the paper screens of the houses having been removed to admit the breeze. The men seem to be lightly and supply built; but I see no saliency of muscles; the lines of the figure are always smooth. Before almost every dwelling, indigo, spread out upon little mats of rice-straw, may be seen drying in the sun.

The country-folk gaze wonderingly at the foreigner. At various places where we halt, old men approach to touch my clothes, apologising with humble bows and winning smiles for their very natural curiosity, and asking my interpreter all sorts of odd questions. Gentler and kindlier faces I never beheld; and they reflect the souls behind them; never yet have I heard a voice raised in anger, nor observed an unkindly act.

And each day, as we travel, the country becomes more beautiful,—beautiful with that fantasticality of landscape only to be found in volcanic lands. But for the dark forests of cedar and pine, and this far faint dreamy sky, and the soft whiteness of the light, there are moments of our journey when I could fancy myself again in the

West Indies, ascending some winding way over the mornes of Dominica or of Martinique. And, indeed, I find myself sometimes looking against the horizon glow for shapes of palms and ceibas. But the brighter green of the valleys and of the mountain-slopes beneath the woods is not the green of young cane, but of rice-fields—thousands upon thousands of tiny rice-fields no larger than cottage gardens, separated from each other by narrow serpentine dikes.

II.

In the very heart of a mountain range, while rolling along the verge of a precipice above rice-fields, I catch sight of a little shrine in a cavity of the cliff overhanging the way, and halt to examine it. The sides and sloping roof of the shrine are formed by slabs of unhewn rock. Within smiles a rudely chiselled image of Batō-Kwannon, Kwannon with-the-Horse's-Head,—and before it bunches of wild flowers have been placed, and an earthen incense-cup, and scattered offerings of dry rice. Contrary to the idea suggested by the strange name, this form of Kwannon is not horse-headed; but the head of a horse is sculptured upon the tiara worn by the divinity. And the symbolism is fully explained by a large wooden sotoba planted beside the shrine, and bearing, among other inscriptions, the words, "*Batō Kwan-ze-on Bosatsu, giu ba bodai han ye.*" For Batō-Kwannon protects the horses and the cattle of the peasant; and he prays her not only that his dumb servants may be preserved from sickness, but also that their spirits may enter, after death, into a happier state of existence. Near the sotoba there has been erected a wooden framework about four feet square, filled with little tablets of pine set edge to edge so as to form one smooth

surface; and on these are written, in rows of hundreds, the names of all who subscribed for the statue and its shrine. The number announced is ten thousand. But the whole cost could not have exceeded ten Japanese dollars (yen); wherefore I surmise that each subscriber gave not more than one rin,—one tenth of one sen, or cent. For the hyakushō are unspeakably poor.*

In the midst of these mountain solitudes, the discovery of that little shrine creates a delightful sense of security. Surely nothing save goodness can be expected from a people gentle-hearted enough to pray for the souls of their horses and cows.**

As we proceed rapidly down a slope, my kurumaya swerves to one side with a suddenness that gives me a violent start, for the road overlooks a sheer depth of

* *Hyakusho*, a peasant, husbandman. The two Chinese characters forming the word signify respectively, "a hundred" (*hyaku*), and "family name" (*sei*). One might be tempted to infer that the appellation is almost equivalent to our phrase, "their name is legion." And a Japanese friend assures me that the inference would not be far wrong. Anciently the peasants had no family name; each was known by his personal appellation, coupled with the name of his lord as possessor or ruler. Thus a hundred peasants on one estate would all be known by the name of their master.

** This custom of praying for the souls of animals is by no means general. But I have seen in the western provinces several burials of domestic animals at which such prayers were said. After the earth was filled in, some incense-rods were lighted above the grave in each instance, and the prayers were repeated in a whisper. A friend in the capital sends me the following curious information:—

"At the Eko-in temple in Tokyō prayers are offered up every morning for the souls of certain animals whose ihai (mortuary tablets) are preserved in the building. A fee of thirty sen will procure burial in the temple-ground and a short service for any small domestic pet."

Doubtless similar temples exist elsewhere. Certainly no one capable of affection for our dumb friends and servants can mock these gentle customs.

several hundred feet. It is merely to avoid hurting a harmless snake making its way across the path. The snake is so little afraid that on reaching the edge of the road it turns its head to look after us.

III.

And now strange signs begin to appear in all these rice-fields: I see everywhere, sticking up above the ripening grain, objects like white-feathered arrows. Arrows of prayer! I take one up to examine it. The shaft is a thin bamboo, split down for about one third of its length; into the slit a strip of strong white paper with ideographs upon it—an ofuda, a Shintō charm—is inserted; and the separated ends of the cane are then rejoined and tied together just above it. The whole, at a little distance, has exactly the appearance of a long, light, well-feathered arrow. That which I first examine bears the words, *"Yu-Asaki-jinja-kozen-son-chu-an-zen"* (From the God whose shrine is before the Village of Peace). Another reads, *"Miho-jinja-sho-gwan-jo-ju-go-kito-shu-go,"* signifying that the Deity of the temple Miho-jinja granteth fully every supplication made unto him. Everywhere, as we proceed, I see the white arrows of prayer glimmering above the green level of the grain; and always they become more numerous. Far as the eye can reach the fields are sprinkled with them, so that they make upon the verdant surface a white speckling as of flowers.

Sometimes, also, around a little rice-field, I see a sort of magical fence, formed by little bamboo rods supporting a long cord from which long straws hang down, like a fringe, and paper cuttings, which are symbols (*gohei*), are suspended at regular intervals. This is the shimenawa, sacred emblem of Shintō. Within the consecrated space

inclosed by it no blight may enter,—no scorching sun wither the young shoots. And where the white arrows glimmer the locust shall not prevail, nor shall hungry birds do evil.

But now I look in vain for the Buddhas. No more great tera, no Shaka, no Amida, no Dai-Nichi-Nyorai; even the Bosatsu have been left behind. Kwannon and her holy kin have disappeared; Kōshin, Lord of Roads, is indeed yet with us; but he has changed his name and become a Shintō deity: he is now Saruda-hiko-no-mikoto; and his presence is revealed only by the statues of the Three Mystic Apes which are his servants,—

Mizaru, who sees no evil, covering his eyes with his hands,

Kikazaru, who hears no evil, covering his ears with his hands,

Iwazaru, who speaks no evil, covering his mouth with his hands.

Yet no! one Bosatsu survives in this atmosphere of magical Shintō: still by the roadside I see at long intervals the image of Jizō-Sama, the charming playfellow of dead children. But Jizō also is a little changed; even in his sextuple representation,* the Roku-Jizō, he appears

* Why *six* Jizō instead of five or three or any other number, the reader may ask. I myself asked the question many times before receiving any satisfactory reply. Perhaps the following legend affords the most satisfactory explanation:—

According to the Book *Taijo-Hoshi-mungyo-nenbutsu-den*, Jizō-Bosatsu was a woman ten thousand ko (*kalpas*) before this era, and became filled with desire to convert all living beings of the Six Worlds and the Four Births. And by virtue of the Supernatural Powers she multiplied herself and simultaneously appeared in all the Rokussho or Six States of Sentient Existence at once, namely in the Jigoku, Gaki, Chikushō, Shura, Ningen, Tenjō, and converted the dwellers thereof.

not standing, but seated upon his lotus-flower; and I see no stones piled up before him, as in the eastern provinces.

IV.

At last, from the verge of an enormous ridge, the roadway suddenly slopes down into a vista of high peaked roofs of thatch and green-mossed eaves—into a village like a coloured print out of old Hiroshige's picture-books, a village with all its tints and colours precisely like the tints and colours of the landscape in which it lies. This is Kami-Ichi, in the land of Hōki.

We halt before a quiet, dingy little inn, whose host, a very aged man, comes forth to salute me; while a silent, gentle crowd of villagers, mostly children and women, gather about the kuruma to see the stranger, to wonder at him, even to touch his clothes with timid smiling curiosity. One glance at the face of the old innkeeper decides me to accept his invitation. I must remain here until to-morrow: my runners are too wearied to go farther to-night.

Weather-worn as the little inn seemed without, it is delightful within. Its polished stairway and balconies are speckless, reflecting like mirror-surfaces the bare feet of the maid-servants; its luminous rooms are fresh and sweet smelling as when their soft mattings were first laid down. The carven pillars of the alcove (*toko*) in my chamber, leaves and flowers chiselled in some black rich wood, are wonders; and the kakemono or scroll-picture

(A friend insists that in order to have done this Jizō must first have become a man.)

Among the many names of Jizō, such as "The Never Slumbering," "The Dragon-Praiser," "The Shining King," "Diamond-of-Pity," I find the significant appellation of "The Countless Bodied."

hanging there is an idyl, Hotei, God of Happiness, drifting in a bark down some shadowy stream into evening mysteries of vapoury purple. Far as this hamlet is from all art-centres, there is no object visible in the house which does not reveal the Japanese sense of beauty in form. The old gold-flowered lacquer-ware, the astonishing box in which sweetmeats (*kwashi*) are kept, the diaphanous porcelain wine-cups dashed with a single tiny gold figure of a leaping shrimp, the tea-cup holders which are curled lotus-leaves of bronze, even the iron kettle with its figurings of dragons and clouds, and the brazen hibachi whose handles are heads of Buddhist lions, delight the eye and surprise the fancy. Indeed, wherever to-day in Japan one sees something totally uninteresting in porcelain or metal, something commonplace and ugly, one may be almost sure that detestable something has been shaped under foreign influence. But here I am in ancient Japan; probably no European eyes ever looked upon these things before.

A window shaped like a heart peeps out upon the garden, a wonderful little garden with a tiny pond and miniature bridges and dwarf trees, like the landscape of a tea-cup; also some shapely stones of course, and some graceful stone lanterns, or tōrō, such as are placed in the courts of temples. And beyond these, through the warm dusk, I see lights, coloured lights, the lanterns of the Bonku, suspended before each home to welcome the coming of beloved ghosts; for by the antique calendar, according to which in this antique place the reckoning of time is still made, this is the first night of the Festival of the Dead.

As in all the other little country villages where I have been stopping, I find the people here kind to me with a kindness and a courtesy unimaginable, indescribable, un-

known in any other country, and even in Japan itself only in the interior. Their simple politeness is not an art; their goodness is absolutely unconscious goodness; both come straight from the heart. And before I have been two hours among these people, their treatment of me, coupled with the sense of my utter inability to repay such kindness, causes a wicked wish to come into my mind. I wish these charming folk would do me some unexpected wrong, something surprisingly evil, something atrociously unkind, so that I should not be obliged to regret them, which I feel sure I must begin to do as soon as I go away.

While the aged landlord conducts me to the bath, where he insists upon washing me himself as if I were a child, the wife prepares for us a charming little repast of rice, eggs, vegetables, and sweetmeats. She is painfully in doubt about her ability to please me, even after I have eaten enough for two men, and apologises too much for not being able to offer me more.

"There is no fish," she says, "for to-day is the first day of the Bonku, the Festival of the Dead; being the thirteenth day of the month. On the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the month nobody may eat fish. But on the morning of the sixteenth day, the fishermen go out to catch fish; and everybody who has both parents living may eat of it. But if one has lost one's father or mother then one must not eat fish, even upon the sixteenth day."

While the good soul is thus explaining I become aware of a strange remote sound from without, a sound I recognise through memory of tropical dances, a measured clapping of hands. But this clapping is very soft and at long intervals. And at still longer intervals there comes

to us a heavy muffled booming, the tap of a great drum, a temple drum.

"Oh! we must go to see it," cries Akira; "it is the Bon-odori, the Dance of the Festival of the Dead. And you will see the Bon-odori danced here as it is never danced in cities—the Bon-odori of ancient days. For customs have not changed here; but in the cities all is changed."

So I hasten out, wearing only, like the people about me, one of those light wide-sleeved summer robes—yukata—which are furnished to male guests at all Japanese hotels; but the air is so warm that even thus lightly clad, I find myself slightly perspiring. And the night is divine,—still, clear, vaster than nights of Europe, with a big white moon flinging down queer shadows of tilted eaves and horned gables and delightful silhouettes of robed Japanese. A little boy, the grandson of our host, leads the way with a crimson paper lantern; and the sonorous echoing of geta, the *koro-koro* of wooden sandals, fills all the street, for many are going whither we are going, to see the dance.

A little while we proceed along the main street; then, traversing a narrow passage between two houses, we find ourselves in a great open space flooded by moonlight. This is the dancing-place; but the dance has ceased for a time. Looking about me, I perceive that we are in the court of an ancient Buddhist temple. The temple building itself remains intact, a low long peaked silhouette against the starlight; but it is void and dark and unhallowed now; it has been turned, they tell me, into a schoolhouse. The priests are gone; the great bell is gone; the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas have vanished, all save one, a broken handed Jizo of stone, smiling with eyelids closed, under the moon.

In the centre of the court is a framework of bamboo supporting a great drum; and about it benches have been arranged, benches from the schoolhouse, on which villagers are resting. There is a hum of voices, voices of people speaking very low, as if expecting something solemn; and cries of children betimes, and soft laughter of girls. And far behind the court, beyond a low hedge of sombre evergreen shrubs, I see soft white lights and a host of tall grey shapes throwing long shadows; and I know that the lights are the *white* lanterns of the dead (those hung in cemeteries only), and that the grey shapes are shapes of tombs.

Suddenly a girl rises from her seat, and taps the huge drum once. It is the signal for the Dance of Souls.

V.

Out of the shadow of the temple a processional line of dancers files into the moonlight and as suddenly halts, —all young women or girls, clad in their choicest attire; the tallest leads; her comrades follow in order of stature; little maids of ten or twelve years compose the end of the procession. Figures lightly poised as birds,—figures that somehow recall the dreams of shapes circling about certain antique vases; those charming Japanese robes, close-clinging about the knees, might seem, but for the great fantastic drooping sleeves, and the curious broad girdles confining them, designed after the drawing of some Greek or Etruscan artist. And, at another tap of the drum, there begins a performance impossible to picture in words, something unimaginable, phantasmal,—a dance, an astonishment.

All together glide the right foot forward one pace, without lifting the sandal from the ground, and extend

both hands to the right, with a strange floating motion and a smiling, mysterious obeisance. Then the right foot is drawn back, with a repetition of the waving of hands and the mysterious bow. Then all advance the left foot and repeat the previous movements, half-turning to the left. Then all take two gliding paces forward, with a single simultaneous soft clap of the hands, and the first performance is reiterated, alternately to right and left; all the sandaled feet gliding together, all the supple hands waving together, all the pliant bodies bowing and swaying together. And so slowly, weirdly, the processional movement changes into a great round, circling about the moonlit court and around the voiceless crowd of spectators.*

And always the white hands sinuously wave together, as if weaving spells, alternately without and within the round, now with palms upward, now with palms downward; and all the elfish sleeves hover duskily together, with a shadowing as of wings; and all the feet poise together with such a rhythm of complex motion, that, in

* Since this sketch was written, I have seen the Bon-odori in many different parts of Japan; but I have never witnessed exactly the same kind of dance. Indeed, I would judge from my experiences in Izumo, in Oki, in Tottori, in Hoki, in Bingo, and elsewhere, that the Bon-odori is not danced in the same way in any two provinces. Not only do the motions and gestures vary according to locality, but also the airs of the songs sung,—and this even when the words are the same. In some places the measure is slow and solemn; in others it is rapid and merry, and characterised by a queer jerky swing, impossible to describe. But everywhere both the motion and the melody are curious and pleasing enough to fascinate the spectator for hours. Certainly these primitive dances are of far greater interest than the performances of geisha. Although Buddhism may have utilised them and influenced them, they are beyond doubt incomparably older than Buddhism.

watching it, one feels a sensation of hypnotism—as while striving to watch a flowing and shimmering of water.

And this soporous allurement is intensified by a dead hush. No one speaks, not even a spectator. And, in the long intervals between the soft clapping of hands, one hears only the shrilling of the crickets in the trees, and the *shu-shu* of sandals, lightly stirring the dust. Unto what, I ask myself, may this be likened? Unto nothing; yet it suggests some fancy of somnambulism,—dreamers, who dream themselves flying, dreaming upon their feet.

And there comes to me the thought that I am looking at something immemorially old, something belonging to the unrecorded beginnings of this Oriental life, perhaps to the crepuscular Kamiyo itself, to the magical Age of the Gods; a symbolism of motion whereof the meaning has been forgotten for innumerable years. Yet more and more unreal the spectacle appears, with its silent smilings, with its silent bowings, as if obeisance to watchers invisible; and I find myself wondering whether, were I to utter but a whisper, all would not vanish forever, save the grey mouldering court and the desolate temple, and the broken statue of Jizō, smiling always the same mysterious smile I see upon the faces of the dancers.

Under the wheeling moon, in the midst of the round, I feel as one within the circle of a charm. And verily this is enchantment; I am bewitched, bewitched by the ghostly weaving of hands, by the rhythmic gliding of feet, above all by the flitting of the marvellous sleeves—apparitional, soundless, velvety as a flitting of great tropical bats. No; nothing I ever dreamed of could be likened to this. And with the consciousness of the ancient hakaba behind me, and the weird invitation of its lanterns, and the ghostly beliefs of the hour and the place, there

creeps upon me a nameless, tingling sense of being haunted. But no! these gracious, silent, waving, weaving shapes are not of the Shadowy Folk, for whose coming the white fires were kindled: a strain of song, full of sweet, clear quavering, like the call of a bird, gushes from some girlish mouth, and fifty soft voices join the chant:—

Sorota soroimashita odorikoga sorota,
Soroikite, kita hare yukata.

"Uniform to view (*as ears of young rice ripening in the field*) all clad alike in summer festal robes, the company of dancers have assembled."

Again only the shrilling of the crickets, the *shu-shu* of feet, the gentle clapping; and the wavering hovering measure proceeds in silence, with mesmeric lentor,—with a strange grace, which, by its very naïveté, seems old as the encircling hills.

Those who sleep the sleep of centuries out there, under the grey stones where the white lanterns are, and their fathers, and the fathers of their fathers' fathers, and the unknown generations behind them, buried in cemeteries of which the place has been forgotten for a thousand years, doubtless looked upon a scene like this. Nay! the dust stirred by those young feet was human life, and so smiled and so sang under this self-same moon, "with woven paces, and with waving hands."

Suddenly a deep male chant breaks the hush. Two giants have joined the round, and now lead it, two superb young mountain peasants nearly nude, towering head and shoulders above the whole of the assembly. Their kimono are rolled about their waists like girdles, leaving their bronzed limbs and torsos naked to the warm air; they wear nothing else save their immense straw hats, and

white tabi, donned expressly for the festival. Never before among these people saw I such men, such thews; but their smiling beardless faces are comely and kindly as those of Japanese boys. They seem brothers, so like in frame, in movement, in the timbre of their voices, as they intone the same song:—

No demo yama demo ko wa umiokeyo,
Sen ryō kura yori ko ga takara.

"Whether brought forth upon the mountain or in the field, it matters nothing: more than a treasure of one thousand ryō, a baby precious is."

And Jizō, the lover of children's ghosts, smiles across the silence.

Souls close to nature's Soul are these; artless and touching their thought, like the worship of that Kishibojin to whom wives pray. And after the silence, the sweet thin voices of the women answer:—

Oomu otoko ni sowa sanu oya wa,
Oyade gozaranu ko no kataki.

"The parents who will not allow their girl to be united with her lover; they are not the parents, but the enemies of their child."

And song follows song; and the round ever becomes larger; and the hours pass unfelt, unheard, while the moon wheels slowly down the blue steeps of the night.

A deep low boom rolls suddenly across the court, the rich tone of some temple bell telling the twelfth hour. Instantly the witchcraft ends, like the wonder of some dream broken by a sound; the chanting ceases; the round dissolves in an outburst of happy laughter, and chatting, and softly-vowelled callings of flower-names which are names of girls, and farewell cries of *"Sayōnara!"* as

dancers and spectators alike betake themselves homeward, with a great *koro-koro* of getas.

And I, moving with the throng, in the bewildered manner of one suddenly roused from sleep, know myself ungrateful. These silvery-laughing folk who now toddle along beside me upon their noisy little clogs, stepping very fast to get a peep at my foreign face, these but a moment ago were visions of archaic grace, illusions of necromancy, delightful phantoms; and I feel a vague resentment against them for thus materialising into simple country-girls.

VI.

Lying down to rest, I ask myself the reason of the singular emotion inspired by that simple peasant-chorus. Utterly impossible to recall the air, with its fantastic intervals and fractional tones;—as well attempt to fix in memory the purlings of a bird; but the indefinable charm of it lingers with me still.

Melodies of Europe awaken within us feelings we can utter, sensations familiar as mother-speech, inherited from all the generations behind us. But how explain the emotion evoked by a primitive chant totally unlike anything in Western melody,—impossible even to write in those tones which are the ideographs of our music-tongue?

And the emotion itself—what is it? I know not; yet I feel it to be something infinitely more old than I, something not of only one place or time, but vibrant to all common joy or pain of being, under the universal sun. Then I wonder if the secret does not lie in some untaught spontaneous harmony of that chant with Nature's most ancient song, in some unconscious kinship to the music of solitudes,—all trillings of summer life that blend to make the great sweet Cry of the Land.

V.

THE CHIEF CITY OF THE PROVINCE OF THE GODS.

I.

The first of the noises of a Matsue day comes to the sleeper like the throbbing of a slow, enormous pulse exactly under his ear. It is a great, soft, dull buffet of sound -like a heartbeat in its regularity, in its muffled depth, in the way it quakes up through one's pillow so as to be felt rather than heard. It is simply the pounding of the ponderous pestle of the kometsuki, the cleaner of rice, a sort of colossal wooden mallet with a handle about fifteen feet long horizontally balanced on a pivot. By treading with all his force on the end of the handle, the naked kometsuki elevates the pestle, which is then allowed to fall back by its own weight into the rice-tub. The measured muffled echoing of its fall seems to me the most pathetic of all sounds of Japanese life; it is the beating, indeed, of the Pulse of the Land.

Then the boom of the great bell of Tokōji, the Zenshu temple, shakes over the town; then come melancholy echoes of drumming from the tiny little temple of Jizō in the street Zaimokuchō, near my house, signalling the Buddhist hour of morning prayer. And finally the cries of the earliest itinerant venders begin,—*"Daikoyai! kaburya-kabu!"*—the sellers of daikon and other strange

vegetables. *"Moyayamoya!"*—the plaintive call of the women who sell little thin slips of kindling-wood for the lighting of charcoal fires.

II.

Roused thus by these earliest sounds of the city's wakening life, I slide open my little Japanese paper window to look out upon the morning over a soft green cloud of spring foliage rising from the river-bounded garden below. Before me, tremulously mirroring everything upon its farther side, glimmers the broad glassy mouth of the Ōhashigawa, opening into the grand Shinji Lake, which spreads out broadly to the right in a dim grey frame of peaks. Just opposite to me, across the stream, the blue-pointed Japanese dwellings have their *to** all closed; they are still shut up like boxes, for it is not yet sunrise, although it is day.

But oh, the charm of the vision,—those first ghostly love-colours of a morning steeped in mist soft as sleep itself resolved into a visible exhalation! Long reaches of faintly-tinted vapour cloud the far lake verge,—long nebulous bands, such as you may have seen in old Japanese picture-books, and must have deemed only artistic whimsicalities unless you had previously looked upon the real phenomena. All the bases of the mountains are veiled by them, and they stretch athwart the loftier peaks at different heights like immeasurable lengths of gauze (this singular appearance the Japanese term "shelving"),** so that the lake appears incomparably larger than it really is, and not an actual lake, but a beautiful spectral sea of the

* Thick solid sliding shutters of unpainted wood, which in Japanese houses serve both as shutters and doors.

** *Tanabiku.*

same tint as the dawn-sky and mixing with it, while peak-tips rise like islands from the brume, and visionary strips of hill-ranges figure as league-long causeways stretching out of sight,—an exquisite chaos, ever changing aspect as the delicate fogs rise, slowly, very slowly. As the sun's yellow rim comes into sight, fine thin lines of warmer tone —spectral violets and opalines—shoot across the flood, tree-tops take tender fire, and the unpainted façades of high edifices across the water change their wood-colour to vapoury gold through the delicious haze.

Looking sunward, up the long Ōhashigawa, beyond the many-pillared wooden bridge, one high-pooped junk, just hoisting sail, seems to me the most fantastically beautiful craft I ever saw,—a dream of Orient seas, so idealised by the vapour is it; the ghost of a junk, but a ghost that catches the light as clouds do; a shape of gold mist, seemingly semi-diaphanous, and suspended in pale blue light.

III.

And now from the river-front touching my garden there rises to me a sound of clapping of hands,—one, two, three, four claps,—but the owner of the hands is screened from view by the shrubbery. At the same time, however, I see men and women descending the stone steps of the wharves on the opposite side of the Ohashigawa, all with little blue towels tucked into their girdles. They wash their faces and hands and rinse their mouths,—the customary ablution preliminary to Shinto prayer. Then they turn their faces to the sunrise and clap their hands four times and pray. From the long high white bridge come other clappings, like echoes, and others again from far light graceful craft, curved like new moons,—extra-

ordinary boats, in which I see bare-limbed fishermen standing with foreheads bowed to the golden East. Now the clappings multiply,—multiply at last into an almost continuous volleying of sharp sounds. For all the population are saluting the rising sun,—O-Hi-San, the Lady of Fire,—Amaterasu-oho-mi-Kami, the Lady of the Great Light.* *"Konnichi-Sama!* Hail this day to thee, divinest Day-Maker! Thanks unutterable unto thee, for this thy sweet light, making beautiful the world!" So, doubtless, the thought, if not the utterance, of countless hearts. Some turn to the sun only, clapping their hands; yet many turn also to the West, to holy Kitzuki, the immemorial shrine; and not a few turn their faces successively to all the points of heaven, murmuring the names of a hundred gods; and others, again, after having saluted the Lady of Fire, look toward high Ichibata, toward the place of the great temple of Yakushi-Nyorai, who giveth sight to the blind, —not clapping their hands as in Shintō worship, but only rubbing the palms softly together after the Buddhist manner. But all—for in this most antique province of Japan all Buddhists are Shintōists likewise—utter the archaic words of Shinto prayer: *"Harai tamai kiyome tamai to Kami imi tami."*

Prayer to the most ancient gods who reigned before the coming of the Buddha, and who still reign here in their own Izumo-land,—in the Land of Reed Plains, in the Place of the Issuing of Clouds; prayer to the deities of primal chaos and primeval sea and of the beginnings of the world,—strange gods with long weird names, kindred of U-hiji-ni-no-Kami, the First Mud-Lord, kindred of Su hiji-ni-no-Kami, the First Sand Lady; prayer to those who

* *Ama-terasu-oho-mi-Kami* literally signifies "the Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Divinity." (See Professor Chamberlain's translation of the *Kojiki*.)

came after them,—the gods of strength and beauty, the world-fashioners, makers of the mountains and the isles, ancestors of those sovereigns whose lineage still is named "The Sun's Succession;" prayer to the Three Thousand Gods "residing within the provinces," and to the Eight Hundred Myriads who dwell in the azure Takama-no-hara, —in the blue Plain of High Heaven. *"Nippon-koku-chū-yaoyorozu-no-Kami-gami-sama!"*

IV.

"Ho—ke-kyō!"

My uguisu is awake at last, and utters his morning prayer. You do not know what an uguisu is? An uguisu is a holy little bird that professes Buddhism. All uguisu have professed Buddhism from time immemorial; all uguisu preach alike to men the excellence of the divine Sutra.

"Ho—ke-kyō!"

In the Japanese tongue, Ho-ke-kyō; in Sanscrit, Sad-dharma-Pundarika: "The Sutra of the Lotus of the Good Law," the divine book of the Nichiren sect. Very brief, indeed, is my little feathered Buddhist's confession of faith, — only the sacred name reiterated over and over again like a litany, with liquid bursts of twittering between.

"Ho ke-kyo!"

Only this one phrase, but how deliciously he utters it! With what slow amorous ecstasy he dwells upon its golden syllables!

It hath been written: "He who shall keep, read, teach, or write this Sutra shall obtain eight hundred good qualities of the Eye. He shall see the whole Triple Universe down to the great hell Aviki, and up to the extremity of existence. He shall obtain twelve hundred good qualities of the Ear. He shall hear all sounds in the Triple Uni-

verse,—sounds of gods, goblins, demons, and beings not human."

"Ho—ke-kyō!"

A single word only. But it is also written: "He who shall joyfully accept but a single word from this Sutra, incalculably greater shall be his merit than the merit of one who should supply all beings in the four hundred thousand Asankhyeyas of worlds with all the necessaries for happiness."

"Ho—ke-kyō!"

Always he makes a reverent little pause after uttering it and before shrilling out his ecstatic warble,—his bird-hymn of praise. First the warble; then a pause of about five seconds; then a slow, sweet, solemn utterance of the holy name in a tone as of meditative wonder; then another pause; then another wild, rich, passionate warble. Could you see him, you would marvel how so powerful and penetrating a soprano could ripple from so minute a throat; for he is one of the very tiniest of all feathered singers, yet his chant can be heard far across the broad river, and children going to school pause daily on the bridge, a whole cho away, to listen to his song. And uncomely withal: a neutral-tinted mite, almost lost in his immense box-cage of hinoki wood, darkened with paper screens over its little wire-grated windows, for he loves the gloom.

Delicate he is and exacting even to tyranny. All his diet must be laboriously triturated and weighed in scales, and measured out to him at precisely the same hour each day. It demands all possible care and attention merely to keep him alive. He is precious, nevertheless. "Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of him," so rare he is. Indeed, I could not have afforded to buy him.

He was sent to me by one of the sweetest ladies in Japan, daughter of the governor of Izumo, who, thinking the foreign teacher might feel lonesome during a brief illness, made him the exquisite gift of this dainty creature.

V.

The clapping of hands has ceased; the toil of the day begins; continually louder and louder the pattering of geta over the bridge. It is a sound never to be forgotten, this pattering of geta over the Ōhashi,—rapid, merry, musical, like the sound of an enormous dance: and a dance it veritably is. The whole population is moving on tiptoe, and the multitudinous twinkling of feet over the verge of the sunlit roadway is an astonishment. All those feet are small, symmetrical,—light as the feet of figures painted on Greek vases,—and the step is always taken toes first: indeed, with geta it could be taken no other way, for the heel touches neither the geta nor the ground, and the foot is tilted forward by the wedge-shaped wooden sole. Merely to stand upon a pair of geta is difficult for one unaccustomed to their use, yet you see Japanese children running at full speed in geta with soles at least three inches high, held to the foot only by a forestrap fastened between the great toe and the other toes, and they never trip and the geta never falls off. Still more curious is the spectacle of men walking in bokkuri or takageta, a wooden sole with wooden supports at least five inches high fitted underneath it so as to make the whole structure seem the lacquered model of a wooden bench. But the wearers stride as freely as if they had nothing upon their feet.

Now children begin to appear, hurrying to school. The undulation of the wide sleeves of their pretty speckled

robes, as they run, looks precisely like a fluttering of extraordinary butterflies. The junks spread their great white or yellow wings, and the funnels of the little steamers which have been slumbering all night by the wharves begin to smoke.

One of the tiny lake steamers lying at the opposite wharf has just opened its steam-throat to utter the most unimaginable, piercing, desperate, furious howl. When that cry is heard everybody laughs. The other little steamboats utter only plaintive mooings, but unto this particular vessel—newly built and launched by a rival company—there has been given a voice expressive to the most amazing degree of reckless hostility and savage defiance. The good people of Matsue, upon hearing its voice for the first time, gave it forthwith a new and just name, —Ōkami Maru. "Maru" signifies a steamship. "Okami" signifies a wolf.

VI.

A very curious little object now comes slowly floating down the river, and I do not think that you could possibly guess what it is.

The Hotoke, or Buddhas, and the beneficent Kami are not the only divinities worshipped by the Japanese of the poorer classes. The deities of evil, or at least some of them, are duly propitiated upon certain occasions, and requited by offerings whenever they graciously vouchsafe to inflict a temporary ill instead of an irremediable misfortune.* (After all, this is no more irrational than the

* "The gods who do harm are to be appeased, so that they may not punish those who have offended them." Such are the words of the great Shintō teacher, Hirata, as translated by Mr. Satow in his article, *The Revival of Pure Shintau.*

thanksgiving prayer at the close of the hurricane season in the West Indies, after the destruction by storm of twenty-two thousand lives.) So men sometimes pray to Ekibiogami, the God of Pestilence, and to Kaze-no-Kami, the God of Wind and of Bad Colds, and to Hoso-no-Kami, the God of Smallpox, and to divers evil genii.

Now when a person is certainly going to get well of smallpox a feast is given to the Hoso-no-Kami, much as a feast is given to the Fox-God when a possessing fox has promised to allow himself to be cast out. Upon a sando-wara, or small straw mat, such as is used to close the end of a rice-bale, one or more kawarake, or small earthenware vessels, are placed. These are filled with a preparation of rice and red beans, called adzukimeshi, whereof both Inari-Sama and Hoso-no-Kami are supposed to be very fond. Little bamboo wands with gohei (paper cuttings) fastened to them are then planted either in the mat or in the adzukimeshi, and the colour of these gohei must be red. (Be it observed that the gohei of other Kami are always white.) This offering is then either suspended to a tree, or set afloat in some running stream at a considerable distance from the home of the convalescent. This is called "seeing the God off."

VII.

The long white bridge with its pillars of iron is recognisably modern. It was, in fact, opened to the public only last spring with great ceremony. According to some most ancient custom, when a new bridge has been built the first persons to pass over it must be the happiest of the community. So the authorities of Matsue sought for the happiest folk, and selected two aged men who had both been married for more than half a century, and who

had had not less than twelve children, and had never lost any of them. These good patriarchs first crossed the bridge, accompanied by their venerable wives, and followed by their grown-up children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, amidst a great clamour of rejoicing, the showering of fireworks, and the firing of cannon.

But the ancient bridge so recently replaced by this structure was much more picturesque, curving across the flood and supported upon multitudinous feet, like a long-legged centipede of the innocuous kind. For three hundred years it had stood over the stream firmly and well, and it had its particular tradition.

When Horiō Yoshiharu, the great general who became daimyō of Izumo in the Keichō era, first undertook to put a bridge over the mouth of this river, the builders laboured in vain; for there appeared to be no solid bottom for the pillars of the bridge to rest upon. Millions of great stones were cast into the river to no purpose, for the work constructed by day was swept away or swallowed up by night. Nevertheless, at last the bridge was built, but the pillars began to sink soon after it was finished; then a flood carried half of it away, and as often as it was repaired so often it was wrecked. Then a human sacrifice was made to appease the vexed spirits of the flood. A man was buried alive in the river-bed below the place of the middle pillar, where the current is most treacherous, and thereafter the bridge remained immovable for three hundred years.

This victim was one Gensuke, who had lived in the street Saikamachi; for it had been determined that the first man who should cross the bridge wearing hakama without a machi* should be put under the bridge; and

* *Machi*, a stiff piece of pasteboard or other material sewn into

Gensuke sought to pass over not having a machi in his hakama, so they sacrificed him. Wherefore the midmost pillar of the bridge was for three hundred years called by his name, — Gensuke-bashira. It is averred that upon moonless nights a ghostly fire flitted about that pillar,— always in the dead watch hour between two and three: and the colour of the light was red, though I am assured that in Japan, as in other lands, the fires of the dead are most often blue.

VIII.

Now some say that Gensuke was not the name of a man, but the name of an era, corrupted by local dialect into the semblance of a personal appellation. Yet so profoundly is the legend believed, that when the new bridge was being built thousands of country-folk were afraid to come to town; for a rumour arose that a new victim was needed, who was to be chosen from among them, and that it had been determined to make the choice from those who still wore their hair in queues after the ancient manner. Wherefore hundreds of aged men cut off their queues. Then another rumour was circulated to the effect that the police had been secretly instructed to seize the one thousandth person of those who crossed the new bridge the first day, and to treat him after the manner of Gensuke. And at the time of the great festival of the Rice-God, when the city is usually thronged by farmers coming to worship at the many shrines of Inari, this year there came but few; and the loss to local commerce was estimated at several thousand yen.

the waist of the hakama at the back, so as to keep the folds of the garment perpendicular and neat-looking.

IX.

The vapours have vanished, sharply revealing a beautiful little islet in the lake, lying scarcely half a mile away,—a low, narrow strip of land with a Shintō shrine upon it, shadowed by giant pines; not pines like ours, but huge, gnarled, shaggy, tortuous shapes, vast-reaching like ancient oaks. Through a glass one can easily discern a torii, and before it two symbolic lions of stone (*Kara-shishi*), one with its head broken off, doubtless by its having been overturned and dashed about by heavy waves during some great storm. This islet is sacred to Benten, the Goddess of Eloquence and Beauty, wherefore it is called Benten-no-shima. But it is more commonly called Yomega-shima, or "The Island of the Young Wife," by reason of a legend. It is said that it arose in one night, noiselessly as a dream, bearing up from the depths of the lake the body of a drowned woman who had been very lovely, very pious, and very unhappy. The people, deeming this a sign from heaven, consecrated the islet to Benten, and thereon built a shrine unto her, planted trees about it, set a torii before it, and made a rampart about it with great curiously shaped stones; and there they buried the drowned woman.

Now the sky is blue down to the horizon, the air is a caress of spring. I go forth to wander through the queer old city.

X.

I perceive that upon the sliding doors, or immediately above the principal entrance of nearly every house, are pasted oblong white papers bearing ideographic inscriptions; and overhanging every threshold I see the sacred

emblem of Shintō, the little rice-straw rope with its long fringe of pendent stalks. The white papers at once interest me; for they are ofuda, or holy texts and charms, of which I am a devout collector. Nearly all are from temples in Matsue or its vicinity; and the Buddhist ones indicate by the sacred words upon them to what particular shū, or sect, the family belongs,—for nearly every soul in this community professes some form of Buddhism as well as the all-dominant and more ancient faith of Shinto. And even one quite ignorant of Japanese ideographs can nearly always distinguish at a glance the formula of the great Nichiren sect from the peculiar appearance of the column of characters composing it, all bristling with long sharp points and banneret zigzags, like an army; the famous text *Namu-myō-ho-ren-ge-kyo,* inscribed of old upon the flag of the great captain Kato Kiyomasa, the extirpator of Spanish Christianity, the glorious *vir ter execrandus* of the Jesuits. Any pilgrim belonging to this sect has the right to call at whatever door bears the above formula and ask for alms or food.

But by far the greater number of the ofuda are Shintō. Upon almost every door there is one ofuda especially likely to attract the attention of a stranger, because at the foot of the column of ideographs composing its text there are two small figures of foxes, a black and a white fox, facing each other in a sitting posture, each with a little bunch of rice-straw in its mouth, instead of the more usual emblematic key. These ofuda are from the great Inari temple of Oshiroyama,* within the castle grounds, and are charms against fire. They represent, indeed, the only form of assurance against fire yet known in Matsue,—so far, at least, as wooden dwellings are concerned. And although

* Kushi-no-ki-Matsuhira-Inari-Daimyōjin.

a single spark and a high wind are sufficient in combination to obliterate a larger city in one day, great fires are unknown in Matsue, and small ones are of rare occurrence.

The charm is peculiar to the city; and of the Inari in question this tradition exists:—

When Naomasu, the grandson of Iyeyasu, first came to Matsue to rule the province, there entered into his presence a beautiful boy, who said: "I came hither from the home of your august father in Echizen, to protect you from all harm. But I have no dwelling-place, and am staying therefore at the Buddhist temple of Fu-mon-in. Now if you will make for me a dwelling within the castle grounds, I will protect from fire the buildings there and the houses of the city, and your other residence likewise which is in the capital. For I am Inari Shinyemon." With these words he vanished from sight. Therefore Naomasu dedicated to him the great temple which still stands in the castle grounds, surrounded by one thousand foxes of stone.

XI.

I now turn into a narrow little street, which, although so ancient that its dwarfed two-story houses have the look of things grown up from the ground, is called the Street of the New Timber. New the timber may have been one hundred and fifty years ago; but the tints of the structures would ravish an artist,—the sombre ashen tones of the wood-work, the furry browns of old thatch, ribbed and patched and edged with the warm soft green of those velvety herbs and mosses which flourish upon Japanese roofs.

However, the perspective of the street frames in a vision more surprising than any details of its mouldering homes.

Between very lofty bamboo poles, higher than any of the dwellings, and planted on both sides of the street in lines, extraordinary black nets are stretched, like prodigious cobwebs against the sky, evoking sudden memories of those monster spiders which figure in Japanese mythology and in the picture-books of the old artists. But these are only fishing-nets of silken thread; and this is the street of the fishermen. I take my way to the great bridge.

XII.

A stupendous ghost!

Looking eastward from the great bridge over those sharply beautiful mountains, green and blue, which tooth the horizon, I see a glorious spectre towering to the sky. Its base is effaced by far mists: out of the air the thing would seem to have shaped itself,—a phantom cone, diaphanously grey below, vaporously white above, with a dream of perpetual snow,—the mighty mountain of Daisen.

At the first approach of winter it will in one night become all blanched from foot to crest; and then its snowy pyramid so much resembles that Sacred Mountain, often compared by poets to a white inverted fan, half opened, hanging in the sky, that it is called Izumo-Fuji, "the Fuji of Izumo." But it is really in Hôki, not in Izumo, though it cannot be seen from any part of Hôki to such advantage as from here. It is the one sublime spectacle of this charming land; but it is visible only when the air is very pure. Many are the marvellous legends related concerning it, and somewhere upon its mysterious summit the Tengu are believed to dwell.

XIII.

At the farther end of the bridge, close to the wharf

where the little steamboats are, is a very small Jizō temple (*Jizō-dō*). Here are kept many bronze drags; and whenever anyone has been drowned and the body not recovered, these are borrowed from the little temple and the river is dragged. If the body be thus found, a new drag must be presented to the temple.

From here, half a mile southward to the great Shintō temple of Tenjin, deity of scholarship and calligraphy, broadly stretches Tenjinmachi, the Street of the Rich Merchants, all draped on either side with dark blue hangings, over which undulate with every windy palpitation from the lake white wondrous ideographs, which are names and signs, while down the wide way, in white perspective, diminishes a long line of telegraph poles.

Beyond the temple of Tenjin the city is again divided by a river, the Shindotegawa, over which arches the bridge Tenjin-bashi. Again beyond this other large quarters extend to the hills and curve along the lake shore. But in the space between the two rivers is the richest and busiest life of the city, and also the vast and curious quarter of the temples. In this islanded district are likewise the theatres, and the place where wrestling-matches are held, and most of the resorts of pleasure.

Parallel with Tenjinmachi runs the great street of the Buddhist temples, or Teramachi, of which the eastern side is one unbroken succession of temples,—a solid front of court walls tile-capped, with imposing gateways at regular intervals. Above this long stretch of tile-capped wall rise the beautiful tilted massive lines of grey-blue temple roofs against the sky. Here all the sects dwell side by side in harmony,—Nichiren-shū, Shingon-shū, Zen-shū, Tendai-shū, even that Shin-shū, unpopular in Izumo because those who follow its teaching strictly must not

worship the Kami. Behind each temple court there is a cemetery, or hakaba; and eastward beyond these are other temples, and beyond them yet others,—masses of Buddhist architecture mixed with shreds of gardens and miniature homesteads, a huge labyrinth of mouldering courts and fragments of streets.

To-day, as usual, I find I can pass a few hours very profitably in visiting the temples; in looking at the ancient images seated within the cups of golden lotus-flowers under their aureoles of gold; in buying curious mamori; in examining the sculptures of the cemeteries, where I can nearly always find some dreaming Kwannon or smiling Jizō well worth the visit.

The great courts of Buddhist temples are places of rare interest for one who loves to watch the life of the people; for these have been for unremembered centuries the playing-places of the children. Generations of happy infants have been amused in them. All the nurses, and little girls who carry tiny brothers or sisters upon their backs, go thither every morning that the sun shines; hundreds of children join them; and they play at strange, funny games,—"Onigokko," or the game of Devil, "Kage-Oni," which signifies the Shadow and the Demon, and "Mekusangokko," which is a sort of "blindman's buff."

Also, during the long summer evenings, these temples are wrestling-grounds, free to all who love wrestling; and in many of them there is a dohyō-ba, or wrestling-ring. Robust young labourers and sinewy artisans come to these courts to test their strength after the day's tasks are done, and here the fame of more than one now noted wrestler was first made. When a youth has shown himself able to overmatch at wrestling all others in his own district, he is challenged by champions of other districts; and if he

can overcome these also, he may hope eventually to become a skilled and popular professional wrestler.

It is also in the temple courts that the sacred dances are performed and that public speeches are made. It is in the temple courts, too, that the most curious toys are sold, on the occasion of the great holidays,—toys most of which have a religious signification. There are grand old trees, and ponds full of tame fish, which put up their heads to beg for food when your shadow falls upon the water. The holy lotus is cultivated therein.

"Though growing in the foulest slime, the flower remains pure and undefiled.

"And the soul of him who remains ever pure in the midst of temptation is likened unto the lotus.

"Therefore is the lotus carven or painted upon the furniture of temples; therefore also does it appear in all the representations of our Lord Buddha.

"In Paradise the blessed shall sit at ease enthroned upon the cups of golden lotus-flowers." *

A bugle-call rings through the quaint street; and round the corner of the last temple come marching a troop of handsome young riflemen, uniformed somewhat like French light infantry, marching by fours so perfectly that all the gaitered legs move as if belonging to a single body, and every sword-bayonet catches the sun at exactly the same angle, as the column wheels into view. These are the students of the Shihan-Gakkō, the College of Teachers, performing their daily military exercises. Their professors give them lectures upon the microscopic study of cellular tissues, upon the segregation of developing nerve structure, upon spectrum analysis, upon the evolution

* From an English composition by one of my Japanese pupils.

of the colour sense, and upon the cultivation of bacteria in glycerine infusions. And they are none the less modest and knightly in manner for all their modern knowledge, nor the less reverentially devoted to their dear old fathers and mothers whose ideas were shaped in the era of feudalism.

XIV.

Here come a band of pilgrims, with yellow straw overcoats, "rain coats" (*mino*), and enormous yellow straw hats, mushroom-shaped, of which the down-curving rim partly hides the face. All carry staffs, and wear their robes well girded up so as to leave free the lower limbs, which are inclosed in white cotton leggings of a peculiar and indescribable kind. Precisely the same sort of costume was worn by the same class of travellers many centuries ago; and just as you now see them trooping by,—whole families wandering together, the pilgrim child clinging to the father's hand,—so may you see them pass in quaint procession across the faded pages of Japanese picture-books a hundred years old.

At intervals they halt before some shop-front to look at the many curious things which they greatly enjoy seeing, but which they have no money to buy.

I myself have become so accustomed to surprises, to interesting or extraordinary sights, that when a day happens to pass during which nothing remarkable has been heard or seen I feel vaguely discontented. But such blank days are rare: they occur in my own case only when the weather is too detestable to permit of going out-of-doors. For with ever so little money one can always obtain the pleasure of looking at curious things. And this has been one of the chief pleasures of the people in

Japan for centuries and centuries, for the nation has passed its generations of lives in making or seeking such things. To divert oneself seems, indeed, the main purpose of Japanese existence, beginning with the opening of the baby's wondering eyes. The faces of the people have an indescribable look of patient expectancy,—the air of waiting for something interesting to make its appearance. If it fail to appear, they will travel to find it: they are astonishing pedestrians and tireless pilgrims, and I think they make pilgrimages not more for the sake of pleasing the gods than of pleasing themselves by the sight of rare and pretty things. For every temple is a museum, and every hill and valley throughout the land has its temple and its wonders.

Even the poorest farmer, one so poor that he cannot afford to eat a grain of his own rice, can afford to make a pilgrimage of a month's duration; and during that season when the growing rice needs least attention hundreds of thousands of the poorest go on pilgrimages. This is possible, because from ancient times it has been the custom for everybody to help pilgrims a little; and they can always find rest and shelter at particular inns (*kichinyado*) which receive pilgrims only, and where they are charged merely the cost of the wood used to cook their food.

But multitudes of the poor undertake pilgrimages requiring much more than a month to perform, such as the pilgrimage to the thirty-three great temples of Kwannon, or that to the eighty-eight temples of Kobodaishi; and these, though years be needed to accomplish them, are as nothing compared to the enormous Sengaji, the pilgrimage to the thousand temples of the Nichiren sect. The time of a generation may pass ere this can be made. One

may begin it in early youth, and complete it only when youth is long past. Yet there are several in Matsue, men and women, who have made this tremendous pilgrimage, seeing all Japan, and supporting themselves not merely by begging, but by some kinds of itinerant peddling.

The pilgrim who desires to perform this pilgrimage carries on his shoulders a small box, shaped like a Buddhist shrine, in which he keeps his spare clothes and food. He also carries a little brazen gong, which he constantly sounds while passing through a city or village, at the same time chanting the *Namu-myō-ho-ren-ge-kyo;* and he always bears with him a little blank book, in which the priest of every temple visited stamps the temple seal in red ink. The pilgrimage over, this book with its one thousand seal impressions becomes an heirloom in the family of the pilgrim.

XV.

I too must make divers pilgrimages, for all about the city, beyond the waters or beyond the hills, lie holy places immemorially old.

Kitzuki, founded by the ancient gods, who "made stout the pillars upon the nethermost rock bottom, and made high the cross-beams to the Plain of High Heaven," —Kitzuki, the Holy of Holies, whose high-priest claims descent from the Goddess of the Sun; and Ichibata, famed shrine of Yakushi-Nyorai, who giveth sight to the blind, —Ichibata-no-Yakushi, whose lofty temple is approached by six hundred and forty steps of stone; and Kiomidzu, shrine of Kwannon of the Eleven Faces, before whose altar the sacred fire has burned without ceasing for a thousand years; and Sada, where the Sacred Snake lies coiled forever on the sambo of the gods; and Oba, with

its temples of Izanami and Izanagi, parents of gods and men, the makers of the world; and Yaegaki, whither lovers go to pray for unions with the beloved; and Kaka, Kaka-ura, Kaka-no-Kukedo San,—all these I hope to see.

But of all places, Kaka-ura! Assuredly I must go to Kaka.

Few pilgrims go thither by sea, and boatmen are forbidden to go there if there be even wind enough "to move three hairs." So that whosoever wishes to visit Kaka must either wait for a period of dead calm—very rare upon the coast of the Japanese Sea—or journey thereunto by land; and by land the way is difficult and wearisome. But I must see Kaka. For at Kaka, in a great cavern by the sea, there is a famous Jizō of stone; and each night, it is said, the ghosts of little children climb to the high cavern and pile up before the statue small heaps of pebbles; and every morning, in the soft sand, there may be seen the fresh prints of tiny naked feet, the feet of the infant ghosts. It is also said that in the cavern there is a rock out of which comes a stream of milk, as from a woman's breast; and the white stream flows forever, and the phantom children drink of it. Pilgrims bring with them gifts of small straw sandals, —the zori that children wear, and leave them before the cavern, that the feet of the little ghosts may not be wounded by the sharp rocks. And the pilgrim treads with caution, lest he should overturn any of the many heaps of stones; for if this be done the children cry.

XVI.

The city proper is as level as a table, but is bounded on two sides by low demilunes of charming hills shadowed with evergreen foliage and crowned with temples or shrines.

There are thirty-five thousand souls dwelling in ten thousand houses forming thirty-three principal and many smaller streets; and from each end of almost every street, beyond the hills, the lake, or the eastern rice-fields, a mountain summit is always visible,—green, blue, or grey according to distance. One may ride, walk, or go by boat to any quarter of the town; for it is not only divided by two rivers, but is also intersected by numbers of canals crossed by queer little bridges curved like a well-bent bow. Architecturally (despite such constructions in European style as the College of Teachers, the great public school, the Kenchō, the new post-office), it is much like other quaint Japanese towns; the structure of its temples, taverns, shops, and private dwellings is the same as in other cities of the western coast. But doubtless owing to the fact that Matsue remained a feudal stronghold until a time within the memory of thousands still living, those feudal distinctions of caste so sharply drawn in ancient times are yet indicated with singular exactness by the varying architecture of different districts. The city can be definitely divided into three architectural quarters: the district of the merchants and shop-keepers, forming the heart of the settlement, where all the houses are two storeys high; the district of the temples, including nearly the whole south-eastern part of the town; and the district or districts of the shizoku (formerly called samurai), comprising a vast number of large, roomy, garden-girt, one storey dwellings. From these elegant homes, in feudal days, could be summoned at a moment's notice five thousand "two-sworded men" with their armed retainers, making a fighting total for the city alone of probably not less than thirteen thousand warriors. More than one third of all the city buildings were then samurai homes; for Matsue was the

military centre of the most ancient province of Japan. At both ends of the town, which curves in a crescent along the lake shore, were the two main settlements of samurai; but just as some of the most important temples are situated outside of the temple district, so were many of the finest homesteads of this knightly caste situated in other quarters. They mustered most thickly, however, about the castle, which stands to-day on the summit of its citadel hill—the Oshiroyama—solid as when first built long centuries ago, a vast and sinister shape, all iron-grey, rising against the sky from a cyclopean foundation of stone. Fantastically grim the thing is, and grotesquely complex in detail; looking somewhat like a huge pagoda, of which the second, third, and fourth storeys have been squeezed down and telescoped into one another by their own weight. Crested at its summit, like a feudal helmet, with two colossal fishes of bronze lifting their curved bodies skyward from either angle of the roof, and bristling with horned gables and gargoyled eaves and tilted puzzles of tiled roofing at every storey, the creation is a veritable architectural dragon, made up of magnificent monstrosities, —a dragon, moreover, full of eyes set at all conceivable angles, above, below, and on every side. From under the black scowl of the loftiest eaves, looking east and south, the whole city can be seen at a single glance, as in the vision of a soaring hawk; and from the northern angle the view plunges down three hundred feet to the castle road, where walking figures of men appear no larger than flies.

XVII.

The grim castle has its legend.

It is related that, in accordance with some primitive and barbarous custom, precisely like that of which so

terrible a souvenir has been preserved for us in the most pathetic of Servian ballads, "The Foundation of Skadra," a maiden of Matsue was interred alive under the walls of the castle at the time of its erection, as a sacrifice to some forgotten gods. Her name has never been recorded; nothing concerning her is remembered except that she was beautiful and very fond of dancing.

Now after the castle had been built, it is said that a law had to be passed forbidding that any girl should dance in the streets of Matsue. For whenever any maiden danced the hill Oshiroyama would shudder, and the great castle quiver from basement to summit.

XVIII.

One may still sometimes hear in the streets a very humorous song, which everyone in town formerly knew by heart, celebrating the Seven Wonders of Matsue. For Matsue was formerly divided into seven quarters, in each of which some extraordinary object or person was to be seen. It is now divided into five religious districts, each containing a temple of the state religion. People living within those districts are called ujiko, and the temple the ujigami, or dwelling-place of the tutelary god. The ujiko must support the ujigami. (Every village and town has at least one ujigami.)

There is probably not one of the multitudinous temples of Matsue which has not some marvellous tradition attached to it; each of the districts has many legends; and I think that each of the thirty-three streets has its own special ghost story. Of these ghost stories I cite two specimens: they are quite representative of one variety of Japanese folklore.

Near to the Fu-mon-in temple, which is in the north-eastern quarter, there is a bridge called Adzuki-togi-bashi, or The Bridge of the Washing of Peas. For it was said in other years that nightly a phantom woman sat beneath that bridge washing phantom peas. There is an exquisite Japanese iris-flower, of rainbow-violet colour, which flower is named kaki-tsubata; and there is a song about that flower called kaki-tsubata-no-uta. Now this song must never be sung near the Adzuki-togi-bashi, because, for some strange reason which seems to have been forgotten, the ghosts haunting that place become so angry upon hearing it that to sing it there is to expose oneself to the most frightful calamities. There was once a samurai who feared nothing, who one night went to that bridge and loudly sang the song. No ghost appearing, he laughed and went home. At the gate of his house he met a beautiful tall woman whom he had never seen before, and who, bowing, presented him with a lacquered box—*fumi-bako*—such as women keep their letters in. He bowed to her in his knightly way; but she said, "I am only the servant,—this is my mistress's gift," and vanished out of his sight. Opening the box, he saw the bleeding head of a young child. Entering his house, he found upon the floor of the guest room the dead body of his own infant son with the head torn off.

Of the cemetery Dai Oji, which is in the street called Nakabaramachi, this story is told:—

In Nakabaramachi there is an ameya, or little shop in which midzu-ame is sold,—the amber tinted syrup, made of malt, which is given to children when milk cannot be obtained for them. Every night at a late hour there came to that shop a very pale woman, all in white,

to buy one rin* worth of midzu-ame. The ame-seller wondered that she was so thin and pale, and often questioned her kindly; but she answered nothing. At last one night he followed her, out of curiosity. She went to the cemetery; and he became afraid and returned.

The next night the woman came again, but bought no midzu-ame, and only beckoned to the man to go with her. He followed her, with friends, into the cemetery. She walked to a certain tomb, and there disappeared; and they heard, under the ground, the crying of a child. Opening the tomb, they saw within it the corpse of the woman who nightly visited the ameya, with a living infant, laughing to see the lantern light, and beside the infant a little cup of midzu-ame. For the mother had been prematurely buried; the child was born in the tomb, and the ghost of the mother had thus provided for it,—love being stronger than death.

XIX.

Over the Tenjin-bashi, or Bridge of Tenjin, and through small streets and narrow of densely populated districts, and past many a tenantless and mouldering feudal homestead, I make my way to the extreme south-western end of the city, to watch the sunset from a little sobaya** facing the lake. For to see the sun sink from this sobaya is one of the delights of Matsue.

There are no such sunsets in Japan as in the tropics: the light is gentle as a light of dreams; there are no furies of colour; there are no chromatic violences in nature in this Orient. All in sea or sky is tint rather than

* *Rin*, one tenth of one cent. A small round copper coin with a square hole in the middle.

** An inn where soba is sold.

colour, and tint vapour-toned. I think that the exquisite taste of the race in the matter of colours and of tints, as exemplified in the dyes of their wonderful textures, is largely attributable to the sober and delicate beauty of nature's tones in this all-temperate world where nothing is garish.

Before me the fair vast lake sleeps, softly luminous, far-ringed with chains of blue volcanic hills shaped like a sierra. On my right, at its eastern end, the most ancient quarter of the city spreads its roofs of blue-grey tile; the houses crowd thickly down to the shore, to dip their wooden feet into the flood. With a glass I can see my own windows and the far-spreading of the roofs beyond, and above all else the green citadel with its grim castle, grotesquely peaked. The sun begins to set, and exquisite astonishments of tinting appear in water and sky.

Dead rich purples cloud broadly behind and above the indigo blackness of the serrated hills -mist purples, fading upward smokily into faint vermilions and dim gold, which again melt up through ghostliest greens into the blue. The deeper waters of the lake, far away, take a tender violet indescribable, and the silhouette of the pine shadowed island seems to float in that sea of soft sweet colour. But the shallower and nearer is cut from the deeper water by the current as sharply as by a line drawn, and all the surface on this side of that line is a shimmering bronze,—old rich ruddy gold bronze.

All the fainter colours change every five minutes, wondrously change and shift like tones and shades of fine shot-silks.

XX.

Often in the streets at night, especially on the nights

of sacred festivals (*matsuri*), one's attention will be attracted to some small booth by the spectacle of an admiring and perfectly silent crowd pressing before it. As soon as one can get a chance to look one finds there is nothing to look at but a few vases containing sprays of flowers, or perhaps some light gracious branches freshly cut from a blossoming tree. It is simply a little flower-show, or, more correctly, a free exhibition of master skill in the arrangement of flowers. For the Japanese do not brutally chop off flower-heads to work them up into meaningless masses of colour, as we barbarians do: they love nature too well for that; they know how much the natural charm of the flower depends upon its setting and mounting, its relation to leaf and stem, and they select a single graceful branch or spray just as nature made it. At first you will not, as a Western stranger, comprehend such an exhibition at all: you are yet a savage in such matters compared with the commonest coolies about you. But even while you are still wondering at popular interest in this simple little show, the charm of it will begin to grow upon you, will become a revelation to you; and, despite your Occidental idea of self-superiority, you will feel humbled by the discovery that all flower displays you have ever seen abroad were only monstrosities in comparison with the natural beauty of those few simple sprays. You will also observe how much the white or pale blue screen behind the flowers enhances the effect by lamp or lantern light. For the screen has been arranged with the special purpose of showing the exquisiteness of plant shadows; and the sharp silhouettes of sprays and blossoms cast thereon are beautiful beyond the imagining of any Western decorative artist.

XXI.

It is still the season of mists in this land whose most ancient name signifies the Place of the Issuing of Clouds. With the passing of twilight a faint ghostly brume rises over lake and landscape, spectrally veiling surfaces, slowly obliterating distances. As I lean over the parapet of the Tenjin-bashi, on my homeward way, to take one last look eastward, I find that the mountains have already been effaced. Before me there is only a shadowy flood far vanishing into vagueness without a horizon—the phantom of a sea. And I become suddenly aware that little white things are fluttering slowly down into it from the fingers of a woman standing upon the bridge beside me, and murmuring something in a low sweet voice. She is praying for her dead child. Each of those little papers she is dropping into the current bears a tiny picture of Jizo, and perhaps a little inscription. For when a child dies the mother buys a small wood-cut (*hanko*) of Jizō, and with it prints the image of the divinity upon one hundred little papers. And she sometimes also writes upon the papers words signifying "For the sake of . . .," inscribing never the living, but the kaimyo or soul-name only, which the Buddhist priest has given to the dead, and which is written also upon the little commemorative tablet kept within the Buddhist household shrine, or *butsuma*. Then, upon a fixed day (most commonly the forty-ninth day after the burial), she goes to some place of running water and drops the little papers therein one by one; repeating, as each slips through her fingers, the holy invocation, *"Namu Jizō, Dai Bosatsu!"*

Doubtless this pious little woman, praying beside me in the dusk, is very poor. Were she not, she would hire

a boat and scatter her tiny papers far away upon the bosom of the lake. (It is now only after dark that this may be done; for the police—I know not why—have been instructed to prevent the pretty rite, just as in the open ports they have been instructed to prohibit the launching of the little straw boats of the dead, the shōryobune).

But why should the papers be cast into running water? A good old Tendai priest tells me that originally the rite was only for the souls of the drowned. But now these gentle hearts believe that all waters flow downward to the Shadow-world and through the Sai-no-Kawara, where Jizō is.

XXII.

At home again, I slide open once more my little paper window, and look out upon the night. I see the paper lanterns flitting over the bridge, like a long shimmering of fireflies. I see the spectres of a hundred lights trembling upon the black flood. I see the broad shoji of dwellings beyond the river suffused with the soft yellow radiance of invisible lamps; and upon those lighted spaces I can discern slender moving shadows, silhouettes of graceful women. Devoutly do I pray that glass may never become universally adopted in Japan, —there would be no more delicious shadows.

I listen to the voices of the city awhile. I hear the great bell of Tokoji rolling its soft Buddhist thunder across the dark, and the songs of the night-walkers whose hearts have been made merry with wine, and the long sonorous chanting of the night-peddlers.

"*U-mu-don-yai-soba-yai!*" It is the seller of hot soba, Japanese buckwheat, making his last round.

"*Umai handan, machibito endan, usemono ninsō kasō kichikyō no urainai!*" The cry of the itinerant fortune-teller.

"Ame-yu!" The musical cry of the seller of midzu-ame, the sweet amber syrup which children love.

"Amai!" The shrilling call of the seller of amazaké, sweet rice-wine.

"Kawachi-no-kuni-hiotan-yama-koi-no-tsuji-ura!" The peddler of love-papers, of divining-papers, pretty tinted things with little shadowy pictures upon them. When held near a fire or a lamp, words written upon them with invisible ink begin to appear. These are always about sweethearts, and sometimes tell one what he does not wish to know. The fortunate ones who read them believe themselves still more fortunate; the unlucky abandon all hope; the jealous become even more jealous than they were before.

From all over the city there rises into the night a sound like the bubbling and booming of great frogs in a marsh,—the echoing of the tiny drums of the dancing-girls, of the charming geisha. Like the rolling of a waterfall continually reverberates the multitudinous pattering of geta upon the bridge. A new light rises in the east; the moon is wheeling up from behind the peaks, very large and weird and wan through the white vapours. Again I hear the sounds of the clapping of many hands. For the wayfarers are paying obeisance to O Tsuki-San: from the long bridge they are saluting the coming of the White Moon-Lady.*

I sleep, to dream of little children, in some mouldering mossy temple court, playing at the game of Shadows and of Demons.

* According to the mythology of the *Kōjiki* the Moon-Deity is a male divinity. But the common people know nothing of the *Kojiki*, written in an archaic Japanese which only the learned can read; and they address the moon as O-Tsuki-San, or "Lady Moon," just as the old Greek idyllists did.

VI.

AT MIONOSEKI.

Seki wa yoi toko,
Asahi wo ukete;
O-Yama arashiga
Soyo-soyoto!

SONG OF MIONOSEKI.

[Seki is a goodly place, facing the morning sun. There, from the holy mountains, the winds blow softly, softly,—*soyo-soyo'o.*]

I.

THE God of Mionoseki hates eggs, hen's eggs. Likewise he hates hens and chickens, and abhors the Cock above all living creatures. And in Mionoseki there are no cocks or hens or chickens or eggs. You could not buy a hen's egg in that place even for twenty times its weight in gold.

And no boat or junk or steamer could be hired to convey to Mionoseki so much as the feather of a chicken, much less an egg. Indeed, it is even held that if you have eaten eggs in the morning you must not dare to visit Mionoseki until the following day. For the great deity of Mionoseki is the patron of mariners and the ruler of storms; and woe unto the vessel which bears unto his shrine even the odour of an egg.

Once the tiny steamer which runs daily from Matsue to Mionoseki encountered some unexpectedly terrible

weather on her outward journey, just after reaching the open sea. The crew insisted that something displeasing to Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami must have been surreptitiously brought on board. All the passengers were questioned in vain. Suddenly the captain discerned upon the stem of a little brass pipe which one of the men was smoking, smoking in the face of death, like a true Japanese, *the figure of a crowing cock!* Needless to say, that pipe was thrown overboard. Then the angry sea began to grow calm; and the little vessel safely steamed into the holy port, and cast anchor before the great torii of the shrine of the god!

II.

Concerning the reason why the Cock is thus detested by the Great Deity of Mionoseki, and banished from his domain, divers legends are told; but the substance of all of them is about as follows: As we read in the Kojiki, Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami, Son of the Great Deity of Kitsuki, was wont to go to Cape Miho,* "to pursue birds and catch fish." And for other reasons also he used to absent himself from home at night, but had always to return before dawn. Now, in those days the Cock was his trusted servant, charged with the duty of crowing lustily when it was time for the god to return. But one morning the bird failed in its duty; and the god, hurrying back in his boat, lost his oars, and had to paddle with his hands; and his hands were bitten by the wicked fishes.

Now the people of Yasugi, a pretty little town on the lagoon of Naka-umi, through which we pass upon our way to Mionoseki, most devoutly worship the same Koto-

* Mionoseki.

shiro-nushi-no-Kami; and nevertheless in Yasugi there are multitudes of cocks and hens and chickens; and the eggs of Yasugi cannot be excelled for size and quality. And the people of Yasugi aver that one may better serve the deity by eating eggs than by doing as the people of Mionoseki do; for whenever one eats a chicken or devours an egg, one destroys an enemy of Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami.

III.

From Matsue to Mionoseki by steamer is a charming journey in fair weather. After emerging from the beautiful lagoon of Naka-umi into the open sea, the little packet follows the long coast of Izumo to the left. Very lofty this coast is, all cliffs and hills rising from the sea, mostly green to their summits, and many cultivated in terraces, so as to look like green pyramids of steps. The bases of the cliffs are very rocky; and the curious wrinklings and corrugations of the coast suggest the work of ancient volcanic forces. Far away to the right, over blue still leagues of sea, appears the long low shore of Hoki, faint as a mirage, with its far beach like an endless white streak edging the blue level, and beyond it vapoury lines of woods and cloudy hills, and over everything, looming into the high sky, the magnificent ghostly shape of Daisen, snow-streaked at its summit.

So for perhaps an hour we steam on, between Hōki and Izumo; the rugged and broken green coast on our left occasionally revealing some miniature hamlet sheltered in a wrinkle between two hills; the phantom coast on the right always unchanged. Then suddenly the little packet whistles, heads for a grim promontory to port, glides by its rocky foot, and enters one of the prettiest little bays imaginable, previously concealed from view.

A shell-shaped gap in the coast,—a semicircular basin of clear deep water, framed in by high corrugated green hills, all wood-clad. Around the edge of the bay the quaintest of little Japanese cities, Mionoseki.

There is no beach, only a semicircle of stone wharves, and above these the houses, and above these the beautiful green of the sacred hills, with a temple roof or two showing an angle through the foliage. From the rear of each house steps descend to deep water; and boats are moored at all the back-doors. We moor in front of the great temple, the Miojinja. Its great paved avenue slopes to the water's edge, where boats are also moored at steps of stone; and looking up the broad approach, one sees a grand stone torii, and colossal stone lanterns, and two magnificent sculptured lions, karashishi, seated upon lofty pedestals, and looking down upon the people from a height of fifteen feet or more. Beyond all this the walls and gate of the outer temple court appear, and beyond them, the roofs of the great haiden, and the pierced projecting cross-beams of the loftier Go-Miojin, the holy shrine itself, relieved against the green of the wooded hills. Picturesque junks are lying in ranks at anchor; there are two deep-sea vessels likewise, of modern build, ships from Ōsaka. And there is a most romantic little break-water built of hewn stone, with a stone lantern perched at the end of it; and there is a pretty humped bridge connecting it with a tiny island on which I see a shrine of Benten, the Goddess of Waters.

I wonder if I shall be able to get any eggs!

IV.

Unto the pretty waiting maiden of the inn Shimaya

I put this scandalous question, with an innocent face but a remorseful heart:—

"Ano ne! tamago wa arimasenka?"

With the smile of a Kwannon she makes reply:—

"Hé! Ahiru-no tamago-ga sukoshi gozarimasu."

Delicious surprise!

There augustly exist eggs—*of ducks!*

But there exist no ducks. For ducks could not find life worth living in a city where there is only deep sea water. And all the ducks' eggs come from Sakai.

V.

This pretty little hotel, whose upper chambers overlook the water, is situated at one end, or nearly at one end, of the crescent of Mionoseki, and the Miojinja almost at the other, so that one must walk through the whole town to visit the temple, or else cross the harbour by boat. But the whole town is well worth seeing. It is so tightly pressed between the sea and the bases of the hills that there is only room for one real street; and this is so narrow that a man could anywhere jump from the second storey of a house upon the water-side into the second storey of the opposite house upon the land-side. And it is as picturesque as it is narrow, with its awnings and polished balconies and fluttering figured draperies. From this main street several little *ruelles* slope to the water's edge, where they terminate in steps; and in all these miniature alleys long boats are lying, with their prows projecting over the edge of the wharves, as if eager to plunge in. The temptation to take to the water I find to be irresistible: before visiting the Miojinja I jump from the rear of our hotel into twelve feet of limpid sea, and cool myself by a swim across the harbour.

On the way to Miojinja, I notice, in multitudes of little shops, fascinating displays of baskets and utensils made of woven bamboo. Fine bamboo-ware is indeed the meibutsu, the special product of Mionoseki; and almost every visitor buys some nice little specimen to carry home with him.

The Miojinja is not in its architecture more remarkable than ordinary Shintō temples in Izumo; nor are its interior decorations worth describing in detail. Only the approach to it over the broad sloping space of level pavement, under the granite torii, and between the great lions and lamps of stone, is noble. Within the courts proper there is not much to be seen except a magnificent tank of solid bronze, weighing tons, which must have cost many thousands of yen. It is a votive offering. Of more humble ex-votos, there is a queer collection in the shamusho or business building on the right of the haiden: a series of quaintly designed and quaindy coloured pictures, representing ships in great storms, being guided or aided to port by the power of Koto-shiro-nushi-no Kami. These are gifts from ships.

The ofuda are not so curious as those of other famous Izumo temples; but they are most eagerly sought for. Those strips of white paper, bearing the deity's name, and a few words of promise, which are sold for a few rin, are tied to rods of bamboo, and planted in all the fields of the country round about. The most curious things sold are tiny packages of rice-seeds. It is alleged that whatever you desire will grow from these rice-seeds, if you plant them uttering a prayer. If you desire bamboos, cotton-plants, peas, lotus-plants, or watermelons, it matters not; only plant the seed and believe, and the desired crop will arise.

VI.

Much more interesting to me than the ofuda of the Miojinja are the yoraku, the pendant ex-votos in the Hojinji, a temple of the Zen sect which stands on the summit of the beautiful hill above the great Shintō shrine. Before an altar on which are ranged the images of the Thirty-three Kwannons, the thirty-three forms of that Goddess of Mercy who represents the ideal of all that is sweet and pure in the Japanese maiden, a strange, brightly coloured mass of curious things may be seen, suspended from the carven ceiling. There are hundreds of balls of worsted and balls of cotton thread of all colours; there are skeins of silk and patterns of silk weaving and of cotton weaving; there are broidered purses in the shape of sparrows and other living creatures; there are samples of bamboo plaiting and countless specimens of needlework. All these are the votive offerings of school-children, little girls only, to the Maid mother of all grace and sweetness and pity. So soon as a baby girl learns something in the way of woman's work,—sewing, or weaving, or knitting, or broidering, she brings her first successful effort to the temple as an offering to the gentle divinity, "whose eyes are beautiful," she "who looketh down above the sound of prayer." Even the infants of the Japanese kindergarten bring their first work here,—pretty paper-cuttings, scissored out and plaited into divers patterns by their own tiny flower-soft hands.

VII.

Very sleepy and quiet by day is Mionoseki: only at long intervals one hears laughter of children, or the chant of oarsmen rowing the most extraordinary boats I ever

saw outside of the tropics; boats heavy as barges, which require ten men to move them. These stand naked to the work, wielding oars with cross-handles (imagine a letter T with the lower end lengthened out into an oar-blade). And at every pull they push their feet against the gunwales to give more force to the stroke; intoning in every pause a strange refrain of which the soft melancholy calls back to me certain old Spanish Creole melodies heard in West Indian waters:—

A-ra-ho-no-san-no-sa,
I-ya-ho-en-ya!
Ghi!
Ghi!

The chant begins with a long high note, and descends by fractional tones with almost every syllable, and faints away at last into an almost indistinguishable hum. Then comes the stroke, *"Ghi!—ghi!"*

But at night Mionoseki is one of the noisiest and merriest little havens of Western Japan. From one horn of its crescent to the other the fires of the shokudai, which are the tall lights of banquets, mirror themselves in the water; and the whole air palpitates with sounds of revelry. Everywhere one hears the booming of the tsudzumi, the little hand-drums of the geisha, and sweet plaintive chants of girls, and tinkling of samisen, and the measured clapping of hands in the dance, and the wild cries and laughter of the players at ken. And all these are but echoes of the diversions of sailors. Verily, the nature of sailors differs but little the world over. Every good ship which visits Mionoseki leaves there, so I am assured, from three hundred to five hundred yen for saké and for dancing girls. Much do these mariners pray the Great Deity who hates eggs to make calm the waters and favourable the

winds, so that Mionoseki may be reached in good time without harm. But having come hither over an unruffled sea with fair soft breezes all the way, small indeed is the gift which they give to the temple of the god, and marvellously large the sums which they pay unto geisha and keepers of taverns. But the god is patient and long-suffering,—except in the matter of eggs.

However, these Japanese seamen are very gentle compared with our own Jack Tars, and not without a certain refinement and politeness of their own. I see them sitting naked to the waist at their banquets; for it is very hot, but they use their chop sticks as daintily and pledge each other in saké almost as graciously as men of a better class. Likewise they seem to treat their girls very kindly. It is quite pleasant to watch them feasting across the street. Perhaps their laughter is somewhat more boisterous and their gesticulation a little more vehement than those of the common citizens; but there is nothing resembling real roughness,—much less rudeness. All become motionless and silent as statues, —fifteen fine bronzes ranged along the wall of the zashiki,* —when some pretty geisha begins one of those histrionic dances which, to the Western stranger, seem at first mysterious as a performance of witchcraft,—but which really are charming translations of legend and story into the language of living grace and the poetry of woman's smile. And as the wine flows, the more urbane becomes the merriment,—until there falls upon all that pleasant sleepiness which saké brings, and the guests, one by one, smilingly depart. Nothing could be happier or gentler than their evening's joviality:—yet

* *Zashiki*, the best and largest room of a Japanese dwelling;—the guest-room of a private house, or the banquet-room of a public inn.

sailors are considered in Japan an especially rough class. What would be thought of our own roughs in such a country?

Well, I have been fourteen months in Izumo; and I have not yet heard voices raised in anger, or witnessed a quarrel: never have I seen one man strike another, or a woman bullied, or a child slapped. Indeed I have never seen any real roughness anywhere that I have been in Japan, except at the open ports, where the poorer classes seem, through contact with Europeans, to lose their natural politeness, their native morals,—even their capacity for simple happiness.

VIII.

Last night I saw the seamen of Old Japan: to-day I shall see those of New Japan. An apparition in the offing has filled all this little port with excitement, an Imperial man of war. Everybody is going out to look at her; and all the long boats that were lying in the alleys are already hastening, full of curious folk, to the steel colossus. A cruiser of the first class, with a crew of five hundred.

I take passage in one of those astounding craft I mentioned before,—a sort of barge propelled by ten exceedingly strong naked men, wielding enormous oars—or rather, sweeps—with cross handles. But I do not go alone: indeed I can scarcely find room to stand, so crowded the boat is with passengers of all ages, especially women who are nervous about going to sea in an ordinary sampan. And a dancing girl jumps into the crowd at the risk of her life, just as we push off,—and burns her arm against my cigar in the jump. I am very sorry for her; but she laughs merrily at my solicitude. And the rowers begin their melancholy somnolent song,—

A-ra-ho-no-san-no-sa
Iya-ho-en-ya!
Ghi!
Ghi!

It is a long pull to reach her,—the beautiful monster, towering motionless there in the summer sea, with scarce a curling of thin smoke from the mighty lungs of her slumbering engines; and that somnolent song of our boatmen must surely have some ancient magic in it; for by the time we glide alongside I feel as if I were looking at a dream. Strange as a vision of sleep, indeed, this spectacle: the host of quaint craft hovering and trembling around that tremendous bulk; and all the long-robed, wide-sleeved multitude of the antique port, —men, women, children, —the grey and the young together, —crawling up those mighty flanks in one ceaseless stream, like a swarming of ants. And all this with a great humming like the humming of a hive, a sound made up of low laughter, and chattering in undertones, and subdued murmurs of amazement. For the colossus overawes them,—this ship of the Tenshi Sama, the Son of Heaven; and they wonder like babies at the walls and the turrets of steel, and the giant guns, and the mighty chains, and the stern bearing of the white-uniformed hundreds looking down upon the scene without a smile, over the iron bulwarks. Japanese those also, yet changed by some mysterious process into the semblance of strangers. Only the experienced eye could readily decide the nationality of those stalwart marines: but for the sight of the Imperial arms in gold, and the glimmering ideographs upon the stern, one might well suppose oneself gazing at some Spanish or Italian ship of war manned by brown Latin men.

I cannot possibly get on board. The iron steps are

occupied by an endless chain of clinging bodies,—blue-robed boys from school, and old men with grey queues, and fearless young mothers holding fast to the ropes with over-confident babies strapped to their backs, and peasants, and fishers, and dancing-girls. They are now simply sticking there like flies: somebody has told them they must wait fifteen minutes. So they wait with smiling patience, and behind them in the fleet of high-prowed boats hundreds more wait and wonder. But they do not wait for fifteen minutes! All hopes are suddenly shattered by a stentorian announcement from the deck: *"Mo jikan ga naikara, miseru koto dekimasen!"* The monster is getting up steam,—going away: nobody else will be allowed to come on board. And from the patient swarm of clingers to the handropes, and the patient waiters in the fleet of boats, there goes up one exceedingly plaintive and prolonged *"Aa!"* of disappointment, followed by artless reproaches in Izumo dialect: *"Gun-jin wa uso iwanuka to omoya!—usotsuki dana!—aa! so dana!"* ("War people as-for-lies-never say,—that-we-thought! —*Aa-aa-aa!*") Apparently the gunjin are accustomed to such scenes; for they do not even smile.

But we linger near the cruiser to watch the hurried descent of the sight seers into their boats, and the slow ponderous motion of the chain cables ascending, and the swarming of sailors down over the bows to fasten and unfasten mysterious things. One, bending head downwards, drops his white cap; and there is a race of boats for the honour of picking it up. A marine leaning over the bulwarks audibly observes to a comrade: *"Aa! gwaikojin dana! —nani shi ni kite iru daro?"* The other vainly suggests: *"Yasu-no-senkyōshi daro."* My Japanese costume does not disguise the fact that I am an alien; but it saves

me from the imputation of being a missionary. I remain an enigma. Then there are loud cries of *"Abunai!"*— if the cruiser were to move now there would be swamping and crushing and drowning unspeakable. All the little boats scatter and flee away.

Our ten naked oarsmen once more bend to their cross-handled oars, and recommence their ancient melancholy song. And as we glide back, there comes to me the idea of the prodigious cost of that which we went forth to see, the magnificent horror of steel and steam and all the multiple enginery of death,—paid for by those humble millions who toil forever knee-deep in the slime of rice-fields, yet can never afford to eat their own rice! Far cheaper must be the food they live upon; and nevertheless, merely to protect the little that they own, such nightmares must be called into existence,—monstrous creations of science mathematically applied to the ends of destruction.

How delightful Mionoseki now seems, drowsing far off there under its blue tiles at the feet of the holy hills!—immemorial Mionoseki, with its lamps and lions of stone, and its god who hates eggs! pretty fantastic Mionoseki, where all things, save the schools, are mediæval still: the high-pooped junks, and the long-nosed boats, and the plaintive chants of oarsmen!

A-ra-ho-no-san-no-sa,
Iya-ho-en-ya!
Ghi!
Ghi!

And we touch the mossed and ancient wharves of stone again: over one mile of lucent sea we have floated back a thousand years! I turn to look at the place of that sinister vision;—and lo!—there is nothing there! Only

the level blue of the flood under the hollow blue of the sky;—and, just beyond the promontory, one far, small white speck: the sail of a junk. The horizon is naked. Gone!—but how soundlessly, how swiftly! She makes nineteen knots. And, oh! Koto-shiro-nushi-no-Kami, there probably existed eggs on board!

VII.

NOTES ON KITZUKI.

I.

KITZUKI, July 20, 1891.

AKIRA is no longer with me. He has gone to Kyōto, the holy Buddhist city, to edit a Buddhist magazine; and I already feel without him like one who has lost his way, – despite his reiterated assurances that he could never be of much service to me in Izumo, as he knew nothing about Shintō.

But for the time being I am to have plenty of company at Kitzuki, where I am spending the first part of the summer holidays; for the little city is full of students and teachers who know me. Kitzuki is not only the holiest place in the San indo; it is also the most fashionable bathing resort. The beach at Inasa bay is one of the best in all Japan; the beach hotels are spacious, airy, and comfortable; and the bathing houses, with hot and cold fresh water baths in which to wash off the brine after a swim, are simply faultless. And in fair weather, the scenery is delightful, as you look out over the summer space of sea. Closing the bay on the right, there reaches out from the hills overshadowing the town a mighty, rugged, pine-clad spur, -the Kitzuki promontory. On the left a low long range of mountains serrate the horizon beyond the shore-sweep, with one huge vapoury shape towering blue

into the blue sky behind them,—the truncated silhouette of Sanbeyama. Before you the Japanese Sea touches the sky. And there, upon still clear nights, there appears a horizon of fire,—the torches of hosts of fishing-boats riding at anchor three and four miles away,—so numerous that their lights seem to the naked eye a band of unbroken flame.

The Guji has invited me and one of my friends to see a great harvest dance at his residence on the evening of the festival of Tenjin. This dance — Honen-odori — is peculiar to Izumo; and the opportunity to witness it in this city is a rare one, as it is going to be performed only by order of the Guji.

II.

The robust pontiff himself loves the sea quite as much as anyone in Kitzuki; yet he never enters a beach hotel, much less a public bathing house. For his use alone a special bathing house has been built upon a ledge of the cliff overhanging the little settlement of Inasa: it is approached by a narrow pathway shadowed by pine trees; and there is a torii before it, and shimenawa. To this little house the Guji ascends daily during the bathing season, accompanied by a single attendant, who prepares his bathing dresses, and spreads the clean mats upon which he rests after returning from the sea. The Guji always bathes robed. No one but himself and his servant ever approaches the little house, which commands a charming view of the bay: public reverence for the pontiff's person has made even his resting-place holy ground. As for the country-folk, they still worship him with hearts and bodies. They have ceased to believe as they did in former times, that anyone upon whom the Kokuzo fixes his eye

at once becomes unable to speak or move; but when he passes among them through the temple court they still prostrate themselves along his way, as before the Ikigami.

III.

KITZUKI, July 23d.

Always, through the memory of my first day at Kitzuki, there will pass the beautiful white apparition of the Miko, with her perfect passionless face, and strange, gracious, soundless tread, as of a ghost.

Her name signifies "the Pet," or "the Darling of the Gods,"—Mi-ko.

The kind Guji, at my earnest request, procured me—or rather, had taken for me—a photograph of the Miko, in the attitude of her dance, upholding the mystic suzu, and wearing, over her crimson hakama, the snowy priestess-robe descending to her feet.

And the learned priest Sasa told me these things concerning the Pet of the Gods, and the Miko-kagura,—which is the name of her sacred dance.

Contrary to the custom at the other great Shintō temples of Japan, such as Ise, the office of miko at Kitzuki has always been hereditary. Formerly there were in Kitzuki more than thirty families whose daughters served the Oho-yashiro as miko: to-day there are but two, and the number of virgin priestesses does not exceed six,—the one whose portrait I obtained being the chief. At Ise and elsewhere the daughter of any Shinto priest may become a miko; but she cannot serve in that capacity after becoming nubile; so that, except in Kitzuki, the miko of all the greater temples are children from ten to twelve years of age. But at the Kitzuki Oho-yashiro the maiden-priestesses are

beautiful girls of between sixteen and nineteen years of age; and sometimes a favourite miko is allowed to continue to serve the gods even after having been married. The sacred dance is not difficult to learn: the mother or sister teaches it to the child destined to serve in the temple. The miko lives at home, and visits the temple only upon festival days to perform her duties. She is not placed under any severe discipline or restrictions; she takes no special vows; she risks no dreadful penalties for ceasing to remain a virgin. But her position being one of high honour, and a source of revenue to her family, the ties which bind her to duty are scarcely less cogent than those vows taken by the priestesses of the antique Occident.

Like the priestesses of Delphi, the miko was in ancient times also a divineress,—a living oracle, uttering the secrets of the future when possessed by the god whom she served. At no temple does the miko now act as sibyl, oracular priestess, or divineress. But there still exists a class of divining-women, who claim to hold communication with the dead, and to foretell the future, and who call themselves miko,—practising their profession secretly; for it has been prohibited by law.

In the various great Shinto shrines of the Empire the Miko-kagura is differently danced. In Kitzuki, most ancient of all, the dance is the most simple and the most primitive. Its purpose being to give pleasure to the gods, religious conservatism has preserved its traditions and steps unchanged since the period of the beginning of the faith. The origin of this dance is to be found in the Kojiki legend of the dance of Ame-no-uzume-no mikoto—she by whose mirth and song the Sun-goddess was lured from the cavern into which she had retired, and brought back

to illuminate the world. And the suzu—the strange bronze instrument with its cluster of bells which the miko uses in her dance—still preserves the form of that bamboo-spray to which Ame-no-uzume-no mikoto fastened small bells with grass, ere beginning her mirthful song.

IV.

Behind the library in the rear of the great shrine, there stands a more ancient structure which is still called the Miko-yashiki, or dwelling place of the miko. Here in former times all the maiden priestesses were obliged to live, under a somewhat stricter discipline than now. By day they could go out where they pleased; but they were under obligation to return at night to the yashiki before the gates of the court were closed. For it was feared that the Pets of the Gods might so far forget themselves as to condescend to become the darlings of adventurous mortals. Nor was the fear at all unreasonable; for it was the duty of a miko to be singularly innocent as well as beautiful. And one of the most beautiful miko who belonged to the service of the Oho-yashiro did actually so fall from grace, giving to the Japanese world a romance which you can buy in cheap printed form at any large bookstore in Japan.

Her name was O Kuni, and she was the daughter of one Nakamura Mongoro of Kitzuki, where her descendants still live at the present day. While serving as dancer in the great temple she fell in love with a ronin named Nagoya Sanza,—a desperate, handsome vagabond, with no fortune in the world but his sword. And she left the temple secretly, and fled away with her lover toward Kyoto. All this must have happened not less than three hundred years ago.

On their way to Kyōto they met another rōnin, whose real name I have not been able lo learn. For a moment only this "wave-man" figures in the story, and immediately vanishes into the eternal Night of death and all forgotten things. It is simply recorded that he desired permission to travel with them, that he became enamoured of the beautiful miko, and excited the jealousy of her lover to such an extent that a desperate duel was the result, in which Sanza slew his rival.

Thereafter the fugitives pursued their way to Kyoto without other interruption. Whether the fair O-Kuni had by this time found ample reason to regret the step she had taken, we cannot know. But from the story of her after-life it would seem that the face of the handsome rōnin who had perished through his passion for her became a haunting memory.

We next hear of her in a strange rôle at Kyoto. Her lover appears to have been utterly destitute; for, in order to support him, we find her giving exhibitions of the Miko kagura in the Shijo-Kawara,—which is the name given to a portion of the dry bed of the river Kamagawa, —doubtless the same place in which the terrible executions by torture took place. She must have been looked upon by the public of that day as an outcast. But her extraordinary beauty seems to have attracted many spectators, and to have proved more than successful as an exhibition. Sanza's purse became well-filled. Yet the dance of O Kuni in the Shijo Kawara was nothing more than the same dance which the miko of Kitzuki dance to-day, in their crimson hakama and snowy robes,—a graceful gliding walk.

The pair next appear in Tōkyō —or, as it was then called, Yedo—as actors. O-Kuni, indeed, is universally

credited by tradition with having established the modern Japanese stage,—the first profane drama. Before her time only religious plays, of Buddhist authorship, seem to have been known. Sanza himself became a popular and successful actor, under his sweetheart's tuition. He had many famous pupils, among them the great Saruwaka, who subsequently founded a theatre in Yedo; and the theatre called after him Saruwakaza, in the street Saruwakachō, remains even unto this day. But since the time of O-Kuni, women have been — at least until very recently — excluded from the Japanese stage; their parts, as among the old Greeks, being taken by men or boys so effeminate in appearance and so skilful in acting that the keenest observer could never detect their sex.

Nagoya Sanza died many years before his companion. O-Kuni then returned to her native place, to ancient Kitzuki, where she cut off her beautiful hair, and became a Buddhist nun. She was learned for her century, and especially skilful in that art of poetry called Renga; and this art she continued to teach until her death. With the small fortune she had earned as an actress she built in Kitzuki the little Buddhist temple called Rengaji, in the very heart of the quaint town,—so called because there she taught the art of Renga. Now the reason she built the temple was that she might therein always pray for the soul of the man whom the sight of her beauty had ruined, and whose smile, perhaps, had stirred something within her heart whereof Sanza never knew. Her family enjoyed certain privileges for several centuries because she had founded the whole art of the Japanese stage; and until so recently as the Restoration the chief of the descendants of Nakamura Mongorō was always entitled to a share in the profits of the Kitzuki theatre, and enjoyed

the title of Zamoto. The family is now, however, very poor.

I went to see the little temple of Rengaji, and found that it had disappeared. Until within a few years it used to stand at the foot of the great flight of stone steps leading to the second Kwannondera, the most imposing temple of Kwannon in Kitzuki. Nothing now remains of the Rengaji but a broken statue of Jizō, before which the people still pray. The former court of the little temple has been turned into a vegetable garden, and the material of the ancient building utilised, irreverently enough, for the construction of some petty cottages now occupying its site. A peasant told me that the kakemono and other sacred objects had been given to the neighbouring temple, where they might be seen.

V.

Not far from the site of the Rengaji, in the grounds of the great hakaba of the Kwannondera, there stands a most curious pine. The trunk of the tree is supported, not on the ground, but upon four colossal roots which lift it up at such an angle that it looks like a thing walking upon four legs. Trees of singular shape are often considered to be the dwelling-places of Kami; and the pine in question affords an example of this belief. A fence has been built around it, and a small shrine placed before it, prefaced by several small torii; and many poor people may be seen, at almost any hour of the day, praying to the Kami of the place. Before the little shrine I notice, besides the usual Kitzuki ex-voto of seaweed, several little effigies of horses made of straw. Why these offerings of horses of straw? It appears that the shrine is

dedicated to Koshin, the Lord of Roads; and those who are anxious about the health of their horses pray to the Road-God to preserve their animals from sickness and death, at the same time bringing these straw effigies in token of their desire. But this rôle of veterinarian is not commonly attributed to Koshin;—and it appears that something in the fantastic form of the tree suggested the idea.

VI.

KITZUKI, July 24th.

Within the first court of the Oho-yashiro, and to the left of the chief gate, stands a small timber structure, ashen-coloured with age, shaped like a common miya or shrine. To the wooden gratings of its closed doors are knotted many of those white papers upon which are usually written vows or prayers to the gods. But on peering through the grating one sees no Shintō symbols in the dimness within. It is a stable! And there, in the central stall, is a superb horse, looking at you. Japanese horseshoes of straw are suspended to the wall behind him. He does not move. He is made of bronze!

Upon enquiring of the learned priest Sasa the story of this horse, I was told the following curious things:—

On the eleventh day of the seventh month, by the ancient calendar,* falls the strange festival called Minige, or "The Body-escaping." Upon that day, 'tis said that the Great Deity of Kitzuki leaves his shrine to pass through all the streets of the city, and along the seashore, after which he enters into the house of the Kokuzō. Wherefore upon that day the Kokuzō was always wont to

* Fourteenth of August.

leave his house; and at the present time, though he does not actually abandon his home, he and his family retire into certain apartments, so as to leave the larger part of the dwelling free for the use of the god. This retreat of the Kokuzō is still called the Minige.

Now while the great Deity Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami is passing through the streets, he is followed by the highest Shintō priest of the shrine,—this kannushi having been formerly called Bekkwa. The word "Bekkwa" means "special" or "sacred fire;" and the chief kannushi was so called because for a week before the festival he had been nourished only with special food cooked with the sacred fire, so that he might be pure in the presence of the God. And the office of Bekkwa was hereditary; and the appellation at last became a family name. But he who performs the rite to-day is no longer called Bekkwa.

Now while performing his function, if the Bekkwa met anyone upon the street, he ordered him to stand aside with the words: "Dog, give way!" And the common people believed, and still believe, that anybody thus spoken to by the officiating kannushi would be changed into a dog. So on that day of the Minige nobody used to go out into the streets after a certain hour, and even now very few of the people of the little city leave their homes during the festival. *

After having followed the deity through all the city, the Bekkwa used to perform, between two and three o'clock in the darkness of the morning, some secret rite by the seaside. (I am told this rite is still annually performed at the same hour.) But, except the Bekkwa him-

* In the pretty little seaside hotel Inaba-ya, where I lived during my stay in Kitzuki, the kind old hostess begged her guests with almost tearful earnestness not to leave the house during the Minige.

self, no man might be present: and it was believed, and is still believed by the common people, that were any man, by mischance, to see the rite he would instantly fall dead, or become transformed into an animal.

So sacred was the secret of that rite, that the Bekkwa could not even utter it *until after he was dead*, to his successor in office.

Therefore, when he died, the body was laid upon the matting of a certain inner chamber of the temple, and the son was left alone with the corpse, after all the doors had been carefully closed. Then, at a certain hour of the night, the soul returned into the body of the dead priest, and he lifted himself up, and whispered the awful secret into the ear of his son,—and fell back dead again.

But what, you may ask, has all this to do with the Horse of Bronze?

Only this:—

Upon the festival of the Minige, the Great Deity of Kitzuki rides through the streets of his city upon the Horse of Bronze.

VII.

The Horse of Bronze, however, is far from being the only statue in Izumo which is believed to run about occasionally at night: at least a score of other artistic things are, or have been, credited with similar ghastly inclinations. The great carven dragon which writhes above the entrance of the Kitzuki haiden used, I am told, to crawl about the roofs at night, until a carpenter was summoned to cut its wooden throat with a chisel, after which it ceased its perambulations. You can see for yourself the mark of the chisel on its throat! At the splendid

Shintō temple of Kasuga, in Matsue, there are two pretty life-size bronze deer,—stag and doe,—the heads of which seemed to me to have been separately cast, and subsequently riveted very deftly to the bodies. Nevertheless I have been assured by some good country-folk that each figure was originally a single casting, but that it was afterwards found necessary to cut off the heads of the deer to make them keep quiet at night. But the most unpleasant customer of all this uncanny fraternity to have encountered after dark was certainly the monster tortoise of Ges-shōji temple in Matsue, where the tombs of the Matsudairas are. This stone colossus is almost seventeen feet in length and lifts its head six feet from the ground. On its now broken back stands a prodigious cubic monolith about nine feet high, bearing a half-obliterated inscription. Fancy—as Izumo folks did—this mortuary incubus staggering abroad at midnight, and its hideous attempts to swim in the neighbouring lotus-pond! Well, the legend runs that its neck *had* to be broken in consequence of this awful misbehaviour. But really the thing looks as if it could only have been broken by an earthquake.

VIII.

Kitzuki, July 25th.

At the Oho-yashiro it is the annual festival of the God of Scholarship, the God of Calligraphy, Tenjin. Here in Kitzuki, the festival of the Divine Scribe, the Tenjin-Matsuri, is still observed according to the beautiful old custom which is being forgotten elsewhere. Long ranges of temporary booths have been erected within the outer court of the temple; and in these are suspended hundreds of long white tablets, bearing specimens of cal-

ligraphy. Every schoolboy in Kitzuki has a sample of his best writing on exhibition. The texts are written only in Chinese characters,—not in hirakana or katakana,—and are mostly drawn from the works of Confucius or Mencius.

To me this display of ideographs seems a marvellous thing of beauty—almost a miracle, indeed, since it is all the work of very, very young boys. Rightly enough, the word "to write" (*kaku*) in Japanese signifies also to "paint" in the best artistic sense. I once had an opportunity of studying the result of an attempt to teach English children the art of writing Japanese. These children were instructed by a Japanese writing-master; they sat upon the same bench with Japanese pupils of their own age, beginners likewise. But they could never learn like the Japanese children. The ancestral tendencies within them rendered vain the efforts of the instructor to teach them the secret of a shapely stroke with the brush. It is not the Japanese boy alone who writes; the fingers of the dead move his brush, guide his strokes.

Beautiful, however, as this writing seems to me, it is far from winning the commendation of my Japanese companion, himself a much experienced teacher. "The greater part of this work," he declares, "is very bad." While I am still bewildered by this sweeping criticism, he points out to me one tablet inscribed with rather small characters, adding: "Only that is tolerably good."

"Why," I venture to observe, "that one would seem to have cost much less trouble; the characters are so small."

"Oh, the size of the characters has nothing to do with the matter," interrupts the master, "it is a question of form."

"Then I cannot understand. What you call very bad seems to me exquisitely beautiful."

"Of course you cannot understand," the critic replies; "it would take you many years of study to understand. And even then"—

"And even then?"

"Well, even then you could only partly understand."

Thereafter I hold my peace on the topic of calligraphy.

IX.

Vast as the courts of the Oho-yashiro are, the crowd within them is now so dense that one must move very slowly, for the whole population of Kitzuki and its environs has been attracted here by the matsuri. All are making their way very gently toward a little shrine built upon an island in the middle of an artificial lake and approached by a narrow causeway. This little shrine, which I see now for the first time (Kitzuki temple being far too large a place to be all seen and known in a single visit), is the Shrine of Tenjin. As the sound of a waterfall is the sound of the clapping of hands before it, and myriads of rin, and bushels of handfuls of rice, are being dropped into the enormous wooden chest there placed to receive the offerings. Fortunately this crowd, like all Japanese crowds, is so sympathetically yielding that it is possible to traverse it slowly in any direction, and thus to see all there is to be seen. After contributing my mite to the coffer of Tenjin, I devote my attention to the wonderful display of toys in the outer courts.

At almost every temple festival in Japan there is a great sale of toys, usually within the court itself,—a miniature street of small booths being temporarily erected for this charming commerce. Every matsuri is a children's holiday. No mother would think of attending a

temple-festival without buying her child a toy: even the poorest mother can afford it; for the price of the toys sold in a temple court varies from one fifth of one sen,* or Japanese cent, to three or four sen; toys worth so much as five sen being rarely displayed at these little shops. But cheap as they are, these frail playthings are full of beauty and suggestiveness, and, to one who knows and loves Japan, infinitely more interesting than the costliest inventions of a Parisian toy-manufacturer. Many of them, however, would be utterly incomprehensible to an English child. Suppose we peep at a few of them.

Here is a little wooden mallet, with a loose tiny ball fitted into a socket at the end of the handle. This is for the baby to suck. On either end of the head of the mallet is painted the mystic *tomoye*,—that Chinese symbol, resembling two huge commas so united as to make a perfect circle, which you may have seen on the title-page of Mr. Lowell's beautiful "Soul of the Far East." To you, however, this little wooden mallet would seem in all probability just a little wooden mallet and nothing more. But to the Japanese child it is full of suggestions. It is the mallet of the Great Deity of Kitzuki, Oho-kuni-nushi-no Kami, —vulgarly called Daikoku,—the God of Wealth, who, by one stroke of his hammer gives fortune to his worshippers.

Perhaps this tiny drum, of a form never seen in the Occident (*tsudzumi*), or this larger drum with a *mitsudomoye*, or triple-comma symbol, painted on each end, might seem to you without religious signification; but both

* There are ten rin to one sen, and ten mon to one rin, or one thousand to one sen. The majority of the cheap toys sold at the matsuri cost from two to nine rin. The rin is a circular copper coin with a square hole in the middle for stringing purposes.

are models of drums used in the Shintō and the Buddhist temples. This queer tiny table is a miniature sambo: it is upon such a table that offerings are presented to the gods. This curious cap is a model of the cap of a Shintō priest. Here is a toy miya, or Shintō shrine, four inches high. This bunch of tiny tin bells attached to a wooden handle might seem to you something corresponding to our Occidental tin rattles; but it is a model of the sacred suzu used by the virgin priestess in her dance before the gods. This face of a smiling chubby girl, with two spots upon her forehead,—a mask of baked clay,—is the traditional image of Ame-no-uzume-no-mikoto, commonly called Otafuku, whose merry laughter lured the Goddess of the Sun out of the cavern of darkness. And here is a little Shintō priest in full hieratic garb: when this little string between his feet is pulled, he claps his hands as if in prayer.

Hosts of other toys are here,—mysterious to the uninitiated European, but to the Japanese child full of delightful religious meaning. In these faiths of the Far East there is little of sternness or grimness,—the Kami are but the spirits of the fathers of the people; the Buddhas and the Bosatsu were men. Happily the missionaries have not succeeded as yet in teaching the Japanese to make religion a dismal thing. These gods smile forever: if you find one who frowns, like Fudo, the frown seems but half in earnest; it is only Emma, the Lord of Death, who somewhat appalls. Why religion should be considered too awful a subject for children to amuse themselves decently with never occurs to the common Japanese mind. So here we have images of the gods and saints for toys,—Tenjin, the Deity of Beautiful Writing,—and Uzume, the laughter-loving,—and Fukusuke,

like a happy schoolboy,—and the Seven Divinities of Good Luck, in a group,—and Fukurō-jin, the God of Longevity, with head so elongated that only by the aid of a ladder can his barber shave the top of it,—and Hotei, with a belly round and huge as a balloon,—and Ebisu, the Deity of Markets and of fishermen, with a tai-fish under his arm,—and Daruma, ancient disciple of Buddha, whose legs were worn off by uninterrupted meditation.

Here likewise are many toys which a foreigner could scarcely guess the meaning of, although they have no religious signification. Such is this little badger, represented as drumming upon its own belly with both forepaws. The badger is believed to be able to use its belly like a drum, and is credited by popular superstition with various supernatural powers. This toy illustrates a pretty fairy-tale about some hunter who spared a badger's life and was rewarded by the creature with a wonderful dinner and a musical performance. Here is a hare sitting on the end of the handle of a wooden pestle which is set horizontally upon a pivot. By pulling a little string, the pestle is made to rise and fall as if moved by the hare. If you have been even a week in Japan you will recognise the pestle as the pestle of a kometsuki, or rice-cleaner, who works it by treading on the handle. But what is the hare? This hare is the Hare-in-the-Moon, called Usagi-no kometsuki: if you look up at the moon on a clear night you can see him cleaning his rice.

Now let us see what we can discover in the way of cheap ingenuities.

Tombo, "the Dragon-Fly." Merely two bits of wood joined together in the form of a T. The lower part is a little round stick, about as thick as a match, but twice as

long; the upper piece is flat, and streaked with paint. Unless you are accustomed to look for secrets, you would scarcely be able to notice that the flat piece is trimmed along two edges at a particular angle. Twirl the lower piece rapidly between the palms of both hands, and suddenly let it go. At once the strange toy rises revolving in the air, and then sails away slowly to quite a distance, performing extraordinary gyrations, and imitating exactly —to the eye at least—the hovering motion of a dragon-fly. Those little streaks of paint you noticed upon the top-piece now reveal their purpose; as the tombō darts hither and thither, even the tints appear to be those of a real dragon-fly; and even the sound of the flitting toy imitates the dragon-fly's hum. The principle of this pretty invention is much like that of the boomerang; and an expert can make his tombō, after flying across a large room, return into his hand. All the tombō sold, however, are not as good as this one; we have been lucky. Price, one tenth of one cent!

Here is a toy which looks like a bow of bamboo strung with wire. The wire, however, is twisted into a corkscrew spiral. On this spiral a pair of tiny birds are suspended by a metal loop. When the bow is held perpendicularly with the birds at the upper end of the string, they descend whirling by their own weight, as if circling round one another; and the twittering of two birds is imitated by the sharp grating of the metal loop upon the spiral wire. One bird flies head upward, and the other tail upward. As soon as they have reached the bottom, reverse the bow, and they will recommence their wheeling flight. Price, two cents,—because the wire is dear.

O-Saru, the "Honourable Monkey."* A little cotton

* Why the monkey is so respectfully mentioned in polite speech,

monkey, with a blue head and scarlet body, hugging a bamboo rod. Under him is a bamboo spring; and when you press it, he runs up to the top of the rod. Price, one eighth of one cent.

O-Saru. Another Honourable Monkey. This one is somewhat more complex in his movements, and costs a cent. He runs up a string, hand over hand, when you pull his tail.

Tori-Kago. A tiny gilded cage, with a bird in it, and plum flowers. Press the edges of the bottom of the cage, and a minuscule wind-instrument imitates the chirping of the bird. Price, one cent.

Karuwazashi, the Acrobat. A very loose-jointed wooden boy clinging with both hands to a string stretched between two bamboo sticks, which are curiously rigged together in the shape of an open pair of scissors. Press the ends of the sticks at the bottom; and the acrobat tosses his legs over the string, seats himself upon it, and finally turns a somersault. Price, one sixth of one cent.

Kobiki, the Sawyer. A figure of a Japanese workman, wearing only a fundoshi about his loins, and standing on a plank, with a long saw in his hands. If you pull a string below his feet, he will go to work in good earnest, sawing the plank. Notice that he pulls the saw towards him, like a true Japanese, instead of pushing it from him, as our own carpenters do. Price, one tenth of one cent.

Chie-no-ita, the "Intelligent Boards," or better, perhaps, "The Planks of Intelligence." A sort of chain composed of about a dozen flat square pieces of white wood, linked together by ribbons. Hold the thing perpendicu-

I do not exactly know; but I think that the symbolical relation of the monkey, both to Buddhism and to Shintō, may perhaps account for the use of the prefix "O" (honourable) before its name.

larly by one end-piece: then turn the piece at right angles to the chain; and immediately all the other pieces tumble over each other in the most marvellous way without unlinking. Even an adult can amuse himself for half an hour with this: it is a perfect *trompe-l'œil* in mechanical adjustment. Price, one cent.

Kitsune-Tanuki. A funny flat paper mask with closed eyes. If you pull a pasteboard slip behind it, it will open its eyes and put out a tongue of surprising length. Price, one sixth of one cent.

Chin. A little white dog, with a collar round its neck. It is in the attitude of barking. From a Buddhist point of view, I should think this toy somewhat immoral. For when you slap the dog's head, it utters a sharp yelp, as of pain. Price, one sen and five rin. Rather dear.

Fuki-agari-koboshi, the Wrestler Invincible. This is still dearer; for it is made of porcelain, and very nicely coloured. The wrestler squats upon his hams. Push him down in any direction, he always returns of his own accord to an erect position. Price, two sen.

Oroga-Heika-Kodomo, the Child Reverencing His Majesty the Emperor. A Japanese schoolboy with an accordion in his hands, singing and playing the national anthem, or Kimiga. There is a little wind-bellows at the bottom of the toy; and when you operate it, the boy's arms move as if playing the instrument, and a shrill small voice is heard. Price, one cent and a half.

Jishaku. This, like the preceding, is quite a modern toy. A small wooden box containing a magnet and a tiny top made of a red wooden button with a steel nail driven through it. Set the top spinning with a twirl of the fingers; then hold the magnet over the nail, and the top

will leap up to the magnet and there continue to spin, suspended in air. Price, one cent.

It would require at least a week to examine them all. Here is a model spinning-wheel, absolutely perfect, for one fifth of one cent. Here are little clay tortoises which swim about when you put them into water,—one rin for two. Here is a box of toy-soldiers,—samurai in full armour,—nine rin only. Here is a Kaze-Kuruma, or wind-wheel,—a wooden whistle with a paper wheel mounted before the orifice by which the breath is expelled, so that the wheel turns furiously when the whistle is blown,—three rin. Here is an Ogi, a sort of tiny quadruple fan sliding in a sheath. When expanded it takes the shape of a beautiful flower,—one rin.

The most charming of all these things to me, however, is a tiny doll—O-Hina-San (Honourable Miss Hina) or *beppin* ("beautiful woman"). The body is a phantom only,—a flat stick covered with a paper kimono,—but the head is really a work of art. A pretty oval face with softly shadowed oblique eyes,—looking shyly downward,—and a wonderful maiden coiffure, in which the hair is arranged in bands and volutes and ellipses and convolutions and foliole curlings most beautiful and extraordinary. In some respects this toy is a costume model, for it imitates exactly the real coiffure of Japanese maidens and brides. But the expression of the face of the beppin is, I think, the great attraction of the toy; there is a shy, plaintive sweetness about it impossible to describe, but deliciously suggestive of a real Japanese type of girl-beauty. Yet the whole thing is made out of a little crumpled paper, coloured with a few dashes of the brush by an expert hand. There are no two O-Hina-San exactly alike out of millions; and when you have become familiar

by long residence with Japanese types, any such doll will recall to you some pretty face that you have seen. These are for little girls. Price, five rin.

X.

Here let me tell you something you certainly never heard of before in relation to Japanese dolls,—not the tiny O-Hina-San I was just speaking about, but the beautiful life-sized dolls representing children of two or three years old; real toy-babes which, although far more cheaply and simply constructed than our finer kinds of Western dolls, become, under the handling of a Japanese girl, infinitely more interesting. Such dolls are well-dressed, and look so life-like,—little slanting eyes, shaven pates, smiles, and all!—that as seen from a short distance the best eyes might be deceived by them. Therefore in those stock photographs of Japanese life, of which so many thousands are sold in the open ports, the conventional baby on the mother's back is most successfully represented by a doll. Even the camera does not betray the substitution. And if you see such a doll, though held quite close to you, being made by a Japanese mother to reach out its hands, to move its little bare feet, and to turn its head, you would be almost afraid to venture a heavy wager that it was only a doll. Even after having closely examined the thing, you would still, I fancy, feel a little nervous at being left alone with it, so perfect the delusion of that expert handling.

Now there is a belief that some dolls do actually become alive.

Formerly the belief was less rare than it is now. Certain dolls were spoken of with a reverence worthy of the Kami, and their owners were envied folk. Such a doll

was treated like a real son or daughter: it was regularly served with food; it had a bed, and plenty of nice clothes, and a name. If in the semblance of a girl, it was O-Toku-San; if in that of a boy, Tokutarō-San. It was thought that the doll would become angry and cry if neglected, and that any ill-treatment of it would bring ill-fortune to the house. And, moreover, it was believed to possess supernatural powers of a very high order.

In the family of one Sengoku, a samurai of Matsue, there was a Tokutarō-San which had a local reputation scarcely inferior to that of Kishibōjin,—she to whom Japanese wives pray for offspring. And childless couples used to borrow that doll, and keep it for a time,—ministering unto it,—and furnish it with new clothes before gratefully returning it to its owners. And all who did so, I am assured, became parents, according to their heart's desire. "Sengoku's doll had a soul." There is even a legend that once, when the house caught fire, the Tokutaro San ran out safely into the garden of its own accord!

The idea about such a doll seems to be this: The new doll is only a doll. But a doll which is preserved for a great many years in one family,* and is loved and played with by generations of children, gradually acquires a soul. I asked a charming Japanese girl: "How can a doll live?"

"Why," she answered, "*if you love it enough,* it will live!"

* As many fine dolls really are. The superior class of O-Hina-San, such as figure in the beautiful displays of the O-Hina-no-Matsuri at rich homes, are heirlooms. Dolls are not given to children to break; and Japanese children seldom break them. I saw at a Doll's Festival in the house of the Governor of Izumo, dolls one hundred years old, charming figurines in ancient court costume.

What is this but Renan's thought of a deity in process of evolution, uttered by the heart of a child?

XI.

But even the most beloved dolls are worn out at last, or get broken in the course of centuries. And when a doll must be considered quite dead, its remains are still entitled to respect. Never is the corpse of a doll irreverently thrown away. Neither is it burned or cast into pure running water, as all sacred objects of the miya must be when they have ceased to be serviceable. And it is not buried. You could not possibly imagine what is done with it.

It is dedicated to the God Kōjin,*—a somewhat mysterious divinity, half-Buddhist, half-Shinto. The ancient Buddhist images of Kojin represented a deity with many arms;—the Shintō Kōjin of Izumo has, I believe, no artistic representation whatever. But in almost every Shinto, and also in many Buddhist, temple grounds, is planted the tree called enoki,** which is sacred to him, and in which he is supposed by the peasantry to dwell; for they pray before the enoki always to Kojin. And there is usually a small shrine placed before the tree, and a little torii also. Now you may often see laid upon such a shrine of Kōjin, or at the foot of his sacred tree, or in a hollow thereof,—if there be any hollow,—pathetic remains of dolls. But a doll is seldom given to Kojin during the lifetime of its possessor. When you see one thus exposed, you may be almost certain that it was found among the effects of some poor dead woman,—the innocent memento

* Not to be confounded with Koshin, the God of Roads.

** *Celtis Willdenowiana*. Sometimes, but rarely, a pine or other tree is substituted for the enoki.

of her girlhood, perhaps even also of the girlhood of her mother and of her mother's mother.

XII.

And now we are to see the Hōnen-odori,—which begins at eight o'clock. There is no moon; and the night is pitch-black overhead: but there is plenty of light in the broad court of the Guji's residence, for a hundred lanterns have been kindled and hung out. I and my friend have been provided with comfortable places in the great pavilion which opens upon the court, and the pontiff has had prepared for us a delicious little supper.

Already thousands have assembled before the pavilion,—young men of Kitzuki and young peasants from the environs, and women and children in multitude, and hundreds of young girls. The court is so thronged that it is difficult to assume the possibility of any dance. Illuminated by the lantern-light, the scene is more than picturesque: it is a carnivalesque display of gala-costume. Of course the peasants come in their ancient attire: some in rain-coats (*mino*), or overcoats of yellow straw; others with blue towels tied round their heads; many with enormous mushroom hats,—all with their blue robes well tucked up. But the young townsmen come in all guises and disguises. Many have dressed themselves in female attire; some are all in white duck, like police; some have mantles on; others wear shawls exactly as a Mexican wears his zarape; numbers of young artisans appear almost as lightly clad as in working-hours, barelegged to the hips, and barearmed to the shoulders. Among the girls some wonderful dressing is to be seen,—ruby-coloured robes, and rich greys and browns and purples, confined with exquisite obi, or girdles of figured satin; but the best

taste is shown in the simple and very graceful black and white costumes worn by some maidens of the better classes,—dresses especially made for dancing, and not to be worn at any other time. A few shy damsels have completely masked themselves by tying down over their cheeks the flexible brims of very broad straw hats. I cannot attempt to talk about the delicious costumes of the children: as well try to describe without paint the variegated loveliness of moths and butterflies.

In the centre of this multitude I see a huge rice-mortar turned upside down; and presently a sandalled peasant leaps upon it lightly, and stands there—with an open paper umbrella above his head. Nevertheless it is not raining. That is the Ondotori, the leader of the dance, who is celebrated through all Izumo as a singer. According to ancient custom, the leader of the Honen-odori* always holds an open umbrella above his head while he sings.

Suddenly, at a signal from the Guji, who has just taken his place in the pavilion, the voice of the Ondotori, intoning the song of thanksgiving, rings out over all the murmuring of the multitude like a silver cornet. A wondrous voice, and a wondrous song, full of trills and quaverings indescribable, but full also of sweetness and true musical swing. And as he sings, he turns slowly round upon his high pedestal, with the umbrella always above his head; never halting in his rotation from right to left, but pausing for a regular interval in his singing, at the close of each two verses, when the people respond with a joyous outcry: *"Ya-ha-to-nai!—ya-ha-to-nai!"* Simultaneously, an astonishingly rapid movement of segregation takes place in the crowd; two enormous rings

* Literally, "The Dance of the Fruitful Year."

of dancers form, one within the other, the rest of the people pressing back to make room for the odori. And then this great double-round, formed by fully five hundred dancers, begins also to revolve from right to left,—lightly, fantastically,—all the tossing of arms and white twinkling of feet keeping faultless time to the measured syllabification of the chant. An immense wheel the dance is, with the Ondo-tori for its axis,—always turning slowly upon his rice-mortar, under his open umbrella, as he sings the song of harvest thanksgiving:—

* *Ichi-wa,—*
Izumo-no-Taisha-Sama-ye;
Ni-ni-wa,—
Niigata-no-Irokami-Sama-ye;
San-wa,—
Sanuki-no-Kompira-Sama-ye;
Shi-ni-wa,—
Shinano-no-Zenkoji-Sama-ye;
Itsutsu,—
Ichibata-O-Yakushi-Sama-ye;
Roku-niwa,—
Rokkakudo-no-O-Jizo-Sama-ye;
Nanatsu,—
Nana-ura-no-O-Ebisu-Sama-ye;
Yattsu,—
Yawata-no-Hachiman-Sama-ye
Kokonotsu,—
Koya-no-O-teradera-ye;
To-niwa,—
Tokoro-no-Ujigami-Sama-ye.

* "First—unto the Taisha-Sama of Izumo;
Second,—to Irokami-Sama of Niigata;
Third,—unto Kompira-Sama of Sanuki;
Fourth,—unto Zenkonji-Sama of Shinano;
Fifth—to O-Yakushi-San of Ichibata;
Sixth,—to O-Jizo-Sama of Rokkakudo;
Seventh,—to O-Ebisu-Sama of Nana-ura;

And the voices of all the dancers in unison roll out the chorus:—

Ya-ha-to-nai!
Ya-ha-to-nai!

Utterly different this whirling joyous Hōnen-odori from the Bon-odori which I witnessed last year at Shimo-Ichi, and which seemed to me a very dance of ghosts. But it is also much more difficult to describe. Each dancer makes a half-wheel alternately to left and right, with a peculiar bending of the knees and tossing up of the hands at the same time,—as in the act of lifting a weight above the head: but there are other curious movements—jerky with the men, undulatory with the women—as impossible to describe as water in motion. These are decidedly complex, yet so regular that five hundred pairs of feet and hands mark the measure of the song as truly as if they were under the control of a single nervous system.

It is strangely difficult to memorise the melody of a Japanese popular song, or the movements of a Japanese dance; for the song and the dance have been evolved through an æsthetic sense of rhythm in sound and in motion as different from the corresponding Occidental sense as English is different from Chinese. We have no ancestral sympathies with these exotic rhythms, no inherited aptitudes for their instant comprehension, no racial impulses whatever in harmony with them. But when they

Eighth,—unto Hachiman-Sama of Yawata;
Ninth,—unto every holy shrine of Koya;
Tenth,—to the Ujigami-Sama of our village."

Japanese readers will appreciate the ingenious manner in which the numeral at the beginning of each phrase is repeated in the name of the sacred place sung of.

have become familiar through study, after a long residence in the Orient, how nervously fascinant the oscillation of the dance, and the singular swing of the song!

This dance, I know, began at eight o'clock;—and the Ondo-tori, after having sung without a falter in his voice for an extraordinary time, has been relieved by a second. But the great round never breaks, never slackens its whirl; it only enlarges as the night wears on. And the second Ondo-tori is relieved by a third; yet I would like to watch that dance forever.

"What time do you think it is?" my friend asks, looking at his watch.

"Nearly eleven o'clock," I make answer.

"Eleven o'clock! It is exactly eight minutes to three o'clock. And our host will have little time for sleep before the rising of the sun."

VIII.

AT HINOMISAKI.

I.

Kitzuki, August 10, 1891.

My Japanese friends urge me to visit Hinomisaki, where no European has ever been, and where there is a far-famed double temple dedicated to Amaterasu-oho-mi-Kami, the Lady of Light, and to her divine brother Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no mikoto. Hinomisaki is a little village on the Izumo coast about five miles from Kitzuki. It may be reached by a mountain path, but the way is extremely steep, rough, and fatiguing. By boat, when the weather is fair, the trip is very agreeable. So, with a friend, I start for Hinomisaki in a very cosy ryōsen, skillfully sculled by two young fishermen.

Leaving the pretty bay of Inasa, we follow the coast to the right,—a very lofty and grim coast without a beach. Below us the clear water gradually darkens to inky blackness, as the depth increases: but at intervals pale jagged rocks rise up from this nether darkness to catch the light fifty feet under the surface. We keep tolerably close to the cliffs, which vary in height from three hundred to six hundred feet,—their bases rising from the water all dull iron-grey, their sides and summits green with young pines and dark grasses that toughen in sea-wind. All the coast is abrupt, ravined, irregular,—curiously breached and fis-

sured. Vast masses of it have toppled into the sea; and the black ruins project from the deep in a hundred shapes of menace. Sometimes our boat glides between a double line of these, or takes a zigzag course through labyrinths of reef-channels. So swiftly and deftly is the little craft impelled to right and left, that one could almost believe it sees its own way and moves by its own intelligence. And again we pass by extraordinary islets of prismatic rock, whose sides, just below the water-line, are heavily mossed with seaweed. The polygonal masses composing these shapes are called by the fishermen "tortoise-shell stones." There is a legend that once Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami, to try his strength, came here, and, lifting up one of these masses of basalt, flung it across the sea to the mountain of Sanbeyama. At the foot of Sanbe the mighty rock thus thrown by the Great Deity of Kitzuki may still be seen, it is alleged, even unto this day.

More and more bare and rugged and ghastly the coast becomes as we journey on, and the sunken ledges more numerous, and the protruding rocks more dangerous, splinters of strata piercing the sea-surface from a depth of thirty fathoms. Then suddenly our boat makes a dash for the black cliff, and shoots into a tremendous cleft of it, an earthquake fissure with sides lofty and perpendicular as the walls of a cañon, -and lo! there is daylight ahead. This is a miniature strait, a short cut to the bay. We glide through it in ten minutes, reach open water again, and Hinomisaki is before us,—a semicircle of houses clustering about a bay curve, with an opening in their centre, prefaced by a torii.

Of all bays I have ever seen, this is the most extraordinary. Imagine an enormous sea-cliff torn out and broken down level with the sea, so as to leave a great

scoop-shaped hollow in the land, with one original fragment of the ancient cliff still standing in the middle of the gap,—a monstrous square tower of rock, bearing trees upon its summit. And a thousand yards out from the shore rises another colossal rock, fully one hundred feet high. This is known by the name of Fumishima or Okyōgashima; and the temple of the Sun-goddess, which we are now about to see, formerly stood upon that islet. The same appalling forces which formed the bay of Hinomisaki doubtless also detached the gigantic mass of Fumishima from this iron coast.

We land at the right end of the bay. Here also there is no beach; the water is black-deep close to the shore, which slopes up rapidly. As we mount the slope, an extraordinary spectacle is before us. Upon thousands and thousands of bamboo frames—shaped somewhat like our clothes-horses—are dangling countless pale yellowish things, the nature of which I cannot discern at first glance. But a closer inspection reveals the mystery. Millions of cuttlefish drying in the sun! I could never have believed that so many cuttlefish existed in these waters. And there is scarcely any variation in the dimensions of them: out of ten thousand there is not the difference of half an inch in length.

II.

The great torii which forms the sea-gate of Hinomisaki is of white granite, and severely beautiful. Through it we pass up the main street of the village, surprisingly wide for about a thousand yards, after which it narrows into a common highway which slopes up a wooded hill and disappears under the shadow of trees. On the right, as you enter the street, is a long vision of grey wooden

houses with awnings and balconies,—little shops, little two-story dwellings of fishermen.—and ranging away in front of these other hosts of bamboo frames from which other millions of freshly caught cuttlefish are hanging. On the other side of the street rises a cyclopean retaining wall, massive as the wall of a daimyo's castle, and topped by a lofty wooden parapet pierced with gates; and above it tower the roofs of majestic buildings, whose architecture strongly resembles that of the structures of Kitzuki; and behind all appears a beautiful green background of hills. This is the Hinomisaki-jinja. But one must walk some considerable distance up the road to reach the main entrance of the court, which is at the farther end of the inclosure, and is approached by an imposing broad flight of granite steps.

The great court is a surprise. It is almost as deep as the outer court of the Kitzuki-no-oho-yashiro, though not nearly so wide; and a paved cloister forms two sides of it. From the court gate a broad paved walk leads to the haiden and shamusho at the opposite end of the court, —spacious and dignified structures above whose roofs appears the quaint and massive gable of the main temple, with its fantastic cross-beams. This temple, standing with its back to the sea, is the shrine of the Goddess of the Sun. On the right side of the main court, as you enter, another broad flight of steps leads up to a loftier court, where another fine group of Shinto buildings stands, —a haiden and a miya; but these are much smaller, like miniatures of those below. Their woodwork also appears to be quite new. The upper miya is the shrine of the god Susano ō,* —brother of Amaterasu-oho-mi-Kami.

* This deity is seldom called by his full name, which has been shortened by common usage into Susano-ō-no-mikoto.

III.

To me the great marvel of the Hinomisaki-jinja is that structures so vast, and so costly to maintain, can exist in a mere fishing hamlet, in an obscure nook of the most desolate coast of Japan. Assuredly the contributions of peasant pilgrims alone could not suffice to pay the salary of a single kannushi; for Hinomisaki, unlike Kitzuki, is not a place possible to visit in all weathers. My friend confirms me in this opinion; but I learn from him that the temples have three large sources of revenue. They are partly supported by the Government; they receive yearly large gifts of money from pious merchants; and the revenues from lands attached to them also represent a considerable sum. Certainly a great amount of money must have been very recently expended here; for the smaller of the two miya seems to have just been wholly rebuilt; the beautiful joinery is all white with freshness, and even the carpenters' odorous chips have not yet been all removed.

At the shamusho we make the acquaintance of the Guji of Hinomisaki, a noble-looking man in the prime of life, with one of those fine aquiline faces rarely to be met with except among the high aristocracy of Japan. He wears a heavy black moustache, which gives him, in spite of his priestly robes, the look of a retired army officer. We are kindly permitted by him to visit the sacred shrines; and a kannushi is detailed to conduct us through the buildings.

Something resembling the severe simplicity of the Kitzuki-no-oho-yashiro was what I expected to see. But this shrine of the Goddess of the Sun is a spectacle of

such splendour that for the first moment I almost doubt whether I am really in a Shintō temple. In very truth there is nothing of pure Shintō here. These shrines belong to the famous period of Ryōbu-Shintō, when the ancient faith, interpenetrated and allied with Buddhism, adopted the ceremonial magnificence and the marvellous decorative art of the alien creed. Since visiting the great Buddhist shrines of the capital, I have seen no temple interior to be compared with this. Daintily beautiful as a casket is the chamber of the shrine. All its elaborated woodwork is lacquered in scarlet and gold; the altar-piece is a delight of carving and colour; the ceiling swarms with dreams of clouds and dragons. And yet the exquisite taste of the decorators—buried, doubtless, five hundred years ago—has so justly proportioned the decoration to the needs of surface, so admirably blended the colours, that there is no gaudiness, no glare, only an opulent repose.

This shrine is surrounded by a light outer gallery which is not visible from the lower court; and from this gallery one can study some remarkable friezes occupying the spaces above the doorways and below the eaves,—friezes surrounding the walls of the miya. These, although exposed for many centuries to the terrific weather of the western coast, still remain masterpieces of quaint carving. There are apes and hares peeping through wonderfully chiselled leaves, and doves and demons, and dragons writhing in storms. And while looking up at these, my eye is attracted by a peculiar velvety appearance of the woodwork forming the immense projecting eaves of the roof. Under the tiling it is more than a foot thick. By standing on tiptoe I can touch it; and I discover that it is even more velvety to the touch than to the sight.

Further examination reveals the fact that this colossal roofing is not solid timber, only the beams are solid. The enormous pieces they support are formed of countless broad slices thin as the thinnest shingles, superimposed and cemented together into one solid-seeming mass. I am told that this composite woodwork is more enduring than any hewn timber could be. The edges, where exposed to wind and sun, feel to the touch just like the edges of the leaves of some huge thumb-worn volume; and their stained velvety yellowish aspect so perfectly mocks the appearance of a book, that while trying to separate them a little with my fingers, I find myself involuntarily peering for a running-title and the number of a folio!

We then visit the smaller temple. The interior of the sacred chamber is equally rich in lacquered decoration and gilding; and below the miya itself there are strange paintings of weird foxes,—foxes wandering in the foreground of a mountain landscape. But here the colours have been damaged somewhat by time; the paintings have a faded look. Without the shrine are other wonderful carvings, doubtless executed by the same chisel which created the friezes of the larger temple.

I learn that only the shrine-chambers of both temples are very old: all the rest has been more than once rebuilt. The entire structure of the smaller temple and its haiden, with the exception of the shrine-room, has just been rebuilt,—in fact, the work is not yet quite done,—so that the emblem of the deity is not at present in the sanctuary. The shrines proper are never repaired, but simply reinclosed in the new buildings when reconstruction becomes a necessity. To repair them or restore them to-day would be impossible: the art that created them is

dead. But so excellent their material and its lacquer envelope that they have suffered little in the lapse of many centuries from the attacks of time.

One more surprise awaits me,—the homestead of the high pontiff, who most kindly invites us to dine with him; which hospitality is all the more acceptable from the fact that there is no hotel in Hinomisaki, but only a kichinyado* for pilgrims.

The ancestral residence of the high pontiffs of Hinomisaki occupies, with the beautiful gardens about it, a space fully equal to that of the great temple courts themselves. Like most of the old-fashioned homes of the nobility and of the samurai, it is but one story high,—an immense elevated cottage, one might call it. But the apartments are lofty, spacious, and very handsome,—and there is a room of one hundred mats.** A very nice little repast, with abundance of good wine, is served up to us, and I shall always remember one curious dish, which I at first mistake for spinach. It is seaweed, deliciously prepared, not the common edible seaweed, but a rare sort, fine like moss.

After bidding farewell to our generous host, we take an uphill stroll to the farther end of the village. We leave the cuttlefish behind; but before us the greater part of the road is covered with matting, upon which indigo is drying in the sun. The village terminates abruptly at the

* A *kichinyado* is an inn at which the traveller is charged only the price of the wood used for fuel in cooking his rice.

** The thick fine straw mats, fitted upon the floor of every Japanese room, are always six feet long by three feet broad. The largest room in the ordinary middle class house is a room of eight mats. A room of one hundred mats is something worth seeing.

top of the hill, where there is another grand granite torii,—a structure so ponderous that it is almost as difficult to imagine how it was ever brought up the hill as to understand the methods of the builders of Stonehenge. From this torii the road descends to the pretty little seaport of U-Ryo, on the other side of the cape; for Hinomisaki is situated on one side of a great promontory, as its name implies,—a mountain-range projecting into the Japanese Sea.

IV.

The family of the Guji of Hinomisaki is one of the oldest of the Kwazoku or noble families of Izumo; and the daughters are still addressed by the antique title of Princess,—O-Hime-San. The ancient official designation of the pontiff himself was Kengyo, as that of the Kitzuki pontiff was Kokuzō; and the families of the Hinomisaki and of the Kitzuki Guji are closely related.

There is one touching and terrible tradition in the long history of the Kengyōs of Hinomisaki, which throws a strange light upon the social condition of this province in feudal days.

Seven generations ago, a Matsudaira, Daimyō of Izumo, made with great pomp his first official visit to the temples of Hinomisaki, and was nobly entertained by the Kengyo,—doubtless in the same chamber of a hundred mats which we to-day were privileged to see. According to custom, the young wife of the host waited upon the regal visitor, and served him with dainties and with wine. She was singularly beautiful; and her beauty, unfortunately, bewitched the Daimyō. With kingly insolence he demanded that she should leave her husband and become his concubine. Although astounded and ter-

rified, she answered bravely, like the true daughter of a samurai, that she was a loving wife and mother, and that, sooner than desert her husband and her child, she would put an end to her life with her own hand. The great Lord of Izumo sullenly departed without further speech, leaving the little household plunged in uttermost grief and anxiety; for it was too well known that the prince would suffer no obstacle to remain in the way of his lust or his hate.

The anxiety, indeed, proved to be well founded. Scarcely had the Daimyō returned to his domains when he began to devise means for the ruin of the Kengyō. Soon afterward, the latter was suddenly and forcibly separated from his family, hastily tried for some imaginary offence, and banished to the islands of Oki. Some say the ship on which he sailed went down at sea with all on board. Others say that he was conveyed to Oki, but only to die there of misery and cold. At all events, the old Izumo records state that, in the year corresponding to 1661 A. D., "the Kengyo Takatoshi died in the land of Oki."

On receiving news of the Kengyō's death, Matsudaira scarcely concealed his exultation. The object of his passion was the daughter of his own Karō, or minister, one of the noblest samurai of Matsue, by name Kamiya. Kamiya was at once summoned before the Daimyō, who said to him: "Thy daughter's husband being dead, there exists no longer any reason that she should not enter into my household. Do thou bring her hither." The Karō touched the floor with his forehead, and departed on his errand.

Upon the following day he reëntered the prince's apartment, and, performing the customary prostration, announced that his lord's commands had been obeyed—that the victim had arrived.

Smiling for pleasure, the Matsudaira ordered that she should be brought at once into his presence. The Karō prostrated himself, retired, and presently returning, placed before his master a kubi-oke* upon which lay the freshly-severed head of a beautiful woman,—the head of the young wife of the dead Kengyō,—with the simple utterance:—

"This is my daughter."

Dead by her own brave will,—but never dishonoured.

Seven generations have been buried since the Matsudaira strove to appease his remorse by the building of temples and the erection of monuments to the memory of his victim. His own race died with him: those who now bear the illustrious name of that long line of daimyōs are not of the same blood; and the grim ruin of his castle, devoured by vegetation, is tenanted only by lizards and bats. But the Kamiya family endures; no longer wealthy, as in feudal times, but still highly honoured in their native city. And each high pontiff of Hinomisaki chooses always his bride from among the daughters of that valiant race.

* The *kubi-oke* was a lacquered tray with a high rim and a high cover. The name signifies "head-box." It was the ancient custom to place the head of a decapitated person upon a kubi-oke before conveying the ghastly trophy into the palace of the prince desirous of seeing it.

NOTE.—The Kengyō of the above tradition was enshrined by Matsudaira in the temple of Shiyeki-jinja, at Ōyama, near Matsue. This miya was built for an atonement; and the people still pray to the spirit of the Kengyō. Near this temple formerly stood a very popular theatre, also erected by the Daimyō in his earnest desire to appease the soul of his victim; for he had heard that the Kengyō was very fond of theatrical performances. The temple is still in excellent preservation; but the theatre has long since disappeared; and its site is occupied by a farmer's vegetable garden.

IX.

SHINJU.

I.

Sometimes they simply put their arms round each other, and lie down together on the iron rails, just in front of an express train. (They cannot do it in Izumo, however, because there are no railroads there yet.) Sometimes they make a little banquet for themselves, write very strange letters to parents and friends, mix something bitter with their rice-wine, and go to sleep forever. Sometimes they select a more ancient and more honoured method: the lover first slays his beloved with a single sword stroke, and then pierces his own throat. Sometimes with the girl's long crape-silk under-girdle (*koshi-obi*) they bind themselves fast together, face to face, and so embracing leap into some deep lake or stream. Many are the modes by which they make their way to the Meido, when tortured by that world-old sorrow about which Schopenhauer wrote so marvellous a theory.

Their own theory is much simpler.

None love life more than the Japanese; none fear death less. Of a future world they have no dread; they regret to leave this one only because it seems to them a world of beauty and of happiness; but the mystery of the future, so long oppressive to Western minds, causes them little concern. As for the young lovers of whom I

speak, they have a strange faith which effaces mysteries for them. They turn to the darkness with infinite trust. If they are too unhappy to endure existence, the fault is not another's, nor yet the world's; it is their own; it is *innen,* the result of errors in a previous life. If they can never hope to be united in this world, it is only because in some former birth they broke their promise to wed, or were otherwise cruel to each other. All this is not heterodox. But they believe likewise that by dying together they will find themselves at once united in another world, though Buddhism proclaims that self-destruction is a deadly sin. Now this idea of winning union through death is incalculably older than the faith of Shaka; but it has somehow borrowed in modern time from Buddhism a particular ecstatic colouring, a mystical glow. *Hasu no hana no ue ni oite matan.* On the lotus-blossoms of paradise they shall rest together. Buddhism teaches of transmigrations countless, prolonged through millions of millions of years, before the soul can acquire the Infinite Vision, the Infinite Memory, and melt into the bliss of Nehan, as a white cloud melts into the summer's blue. But these suffering ones think never of Nehan; love's union, their supremest wish, may be reached, they fancy, through the pang of a single death. The fancies of all, indeed, —as their poor letters show,—are not the same. Some think themselves about to enter Amida's paradise of light; some see in their visional hope the saki-no-yo only, the future rebirth, when beloved shall meet beloved again, in the all-joyous freshness of another youth; while the idea of many, indeed of the majority, is vaguer far,—only a shadowy drifting together through vapoury silences, as in the faint bliss of dreams.

They always pray to be buried together. Often this

prayer is refused by the parents or the guardians, and the people deem this refusal a cruel thing, for 'tis believed that those who die for love of each other will find no rest, if denied the same tomb. But when the prayer is granted the ceremony of burial is beautiful and touching. From the two homes the two funeral processions issue to meet in the temple court, by light of lanterns. There, after the recitation of the kyō, and the accustomed impressive ceremonies, the chief priest utters an address to the souls of the dead. Compassionately he speaks of the error and the sin; of the youth of the victims, brief and comely as the flowers that blossom and fall in the first burst of spring. He speaks of the Illusion,—Mayoi,—which so wrought upon them; he recites the warning of the Teacher. But sometimes he will even predict the future reunion of the lovers in some happier and higher life, re-echoing the popular heart-thought with a simple eloquence that makes his hearers weep. Then the two processions form into one, which takes its way to the cemetery where the grave has already been prepared. The two coffins are lowered together, so that their sides touch as they rest at the bottom of the excavation. Then the yama-no-mono* folk remove the planks which separate the pair,—making the two coffins into one; above the reunited dead the earth is heaped: and a haka, bearing in chiselled letters the story of their fate, and perhaps a little poem, is placed above the mingling of their dust.

II.

These suicides of lovers are termed "jōshi" or "shinjū"

* *Yama-no-mono* ("mountain-folk,"—so called from their settlement on the hills above Tokōji), a pariah-class whose special calling is the washing of the dead and the making of graves.

—(both words being written with the same Chinese characters)—signifying "heart-death," "passion-death," or "love-death." They most commonly occur, in the case of women, among the jorō* class; but occasionally also among young girls of a more respectable class. There is a fatalistic belief that if one shinjū occurs among the inmates of a jorōya, two more are sure to follow. Doubtless the belief itself is the cause that cases of shinjū do commonly occur in series of three.

The poor girls who voluntarily sell themselves to a life of shame for the sake of their families in time of uttermost distress do not, in Japan (except, perhaps, in those open ports where European vice and brutality have become demoralising influences), ever reach that depth of degradation to which their Western sisters descend. Many indeed retain, through all the period of their terrible servitude, a refinement of manner, a delicacy of sentiment, and a natural modesty that seem, under such conditions, as extraordinary as they are touching.

Only yesterday a case of shinjū startled this quiet city. The servant of a physician in the street called Nadamachi, entering the chamber of his master's son a little after sunrise, found the young man lying dead with a dead girl in his arms. The son had been disinherited. The girl was a jorō. Last night they were buried, but not together; for the father was not less angered than grieved that such a thing should have been.

Her name was Kane. She was remarkably pretty and very gentle; and from all accounts it would seem that her master had treated her with a kindness unusual in men of his infamous class. She had sold herself for the sake

* *Jorō:* a courtesan.

of her mother and a child-sister. The father was dead, and they had lost everything. She was then seventeen. She had been in the house scarcely a year when she met the youth. They fell seriously in love with each other at once. Nothing more terrible could have befallen them; for they could never hope to become man and wife. The young man, though still allowed the privileges of a son, had been disinherited in favour of an adopted brother of steadier habits. The unhappy pair spent all they had for the privilege of seeing each other: she sold even her dresses to pay for it. Then for the last time they met by stealth, late at night, in the physician's house, drank death, and laid down to sleep forever.

I saw the funeral procession of the girl winding its way by the light of paper lanterns —the wan dead glow that is like a shimmer of phosphorescence —to the Street of the Temples, followed by a long train of women white-hooded, white robed, white-girdled, passing all soundlessly, —a troop of ghosts.

So through blackness to the Meido the white Shapes flit — the eternal procession of Souls—in painted Buddhist dreams of the Under-world.

III.

My friend who writes for the "San-in Shimbun," which to-morrow will print the whole sad story, tells me that compassionate folk have already decked the new-made graves with flowers and with sprays of shikimi.* Then drawing from a long native envelope a long, light, thin roll of paper covered with beautiful Japanese writing, and unfolding it before me, he adds:—

"She left this letter to the keeper of the house in

* *Illicium religiosum.*

which she lived: it has been given to us for publication. It is very prettily written. But I cannot translate it well; for it is written in woman's language. The language of letters written by women is not the same as that of letters written by men. Women use particular words and expressions. For instance, in men's language 'I' is watakushi, or ware, or yo, or boku, according to rank or circumstance, but in the language of woman, it is warawa. And women's language is very soft and gentle; and I do not think it is possible to translate such softness and amiability of words into any other language. So I can only give you an imperfect idea of the letter."

And he interprets, slowly, thus:—

"I leave this letter:

"As you know, from last spring I began to love Tashirō-San; and he also fell in love with me. And now, alas!—the influence of our relation in some previous birth having come upon us,—and the promise we made each other in that former life to become wife and husband having been broken,—even to-day I must travel to the Meido.

"You not only treated me very kindly, though you found me so stupid and without influence,* but you likewise aided in many ways for my worthless sake my mother and sister. And now, since I have not been able to repay you even the one-myriadth part of that kindness and pity in which you enveloped me,—pity great as the mountains and the sea,**—it would not be without just reason that you should hate me as a great criminal.

"But though I doubt not this which I am about to do will seem a wicked folly, I am forced to it by conditions

* Literally: "without shadow" or "shadowless."

** *Umi-yama-no-on.*

and by my own heart. Wherefore I still may pray you to pardon my past faults. And though I go to the Meido, never shall I forget your mercy to me—great as the mountains and the sea. From under the shadow of the grasses* I shall still try to recompense you—to send back my gratitude to you and to your house. Again, with all my heart I pray you: do not be angry with me.

"Many more things I would like to write. But now my heart is not a heart; and I must quickly go. And so I shall lay down my writing-brush.

"It is written so clumsily, this.

"Kane thrice prostrates herself before you.

"From KANE.

"To —— —— SAMA."

"Well, it is a characteristic shinjū letter," my friend comments, after a moment's silence, replacing the frail white paper in its envelope. "So I thought it would interest you. And now, although it is growing dark, I am going to the cemetery to see what has been done at the grave. Would you like to come with me?"

We take our way over the long white bridge, up the shadowy Street of the Temples, toward the ancient hakaba of Miokoji,—and the darkness grows as we walk. A thin moon hangs just above the roofs of the great temples.

Suddenly a far voice, sonorous and sweet,—a man's voice,—breaks into song under the starred night: a song full of strange charm and tones like warblings,—those Japanese tones of popular emotion which seem to have been learned from the songs of birds. Some happy workman returning home. So clear the thin frosty air that

* *Kusaba-no-kagé.*

each syllable quivers to us; but I cannot understand the words:—

Saité yuké toya, ano ya wo saité;
Yuké ba chikayoru nushi no soba.

"What is that?" I ask my friend.

He answers;—

"A love-song. *'Go forward, straight forward that way, to the house that thou seest before thee;—the nearer thou goest thereto, the nearer to her* shalt thou be.'"*

* Or "him." This is a free rendering. The word "nushi" simply refers to the owner of the house.

X.

YAEGAKI-JINJA.

I.

Unto Yaegaki-jinja, which is in the village of Sakusa in Iu, in the Land of Izumo, all youths and maidens go who are in love, and who can make the pilgrimage. For in the temple of Yaegaki at Sakusa, Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto and his wife Inada-hime and their son Saku-sa no-mikoto are enshrined. And these are the Deities of Wedlock and of Love; and they set the solitary in families;—and by their doing are destinies coupled even from the hour of birth. Wherefore one should suppose that to make pilgrimage to their temple to pray about things long since irrevocably settled were simple waste of time. But in what land did ever religious practice and theology agree? Scholiasts and priests create or promulgate doctrine and dogma, but the good people always insist upon making the gods according to their own heart,—and these are by far the better class of gods. Moreover, the history of Susano-ō, the Impetuous Male Deity, does not indicate that destiny had anything to do with his particular case: he fell in love with the Wondrous Inada Princess at first sight,—as it is written in the Kojiki:—

"Then Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto descended to a place called Tori-kami at the headwaters of the River Hi in the land of

Idzumo. At this time a chopstick came floating down the stream. So Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto, thinking that there must be people at the headwaters of the river, went up it in quest of them. And he came upon an old man and an old woman who had a young girl between them, and were weeping. Then he deigned to ask: 'Who are ye?' So the old man replied, saying: 'I am an Earthly Deity, son of the Deity Oho-yama-tsu-mi-no-Kami. I am called by the name of Ashi-nadzu-chi; my wife is called by the name of Te-nadzu-chi; and my daughter is called by the name of Kushi-Inada-hime.' Again he asked: 'What is the cause of your crying?' The old man answered, saying: 'I had originally eight young daughters. But the eight-forked serpent of Koshi has come every year, and devoured one; and it is now its time to come, wherefore we weep.' Then he asked him: 'What is its form like?' The old man answered, saying: 'Its eyes are like akaka-gachi; it has one body with eight heads and eight tails. Moreover, upon its body grow moss and sugi and hinoki trees. Its length extends over eight valleys and eight hills; and if one look at its belly, it is all constantly bloody and inflamed.' Then Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto said to the old man: 'If this be thy daughter, wilt thou offer her to me?' He replied: 'With reverence; but I know not thine august name.' Then he replied saying: 'I am elder brother to Ama-terasu-oho-mi-Kami. So now I have descended from heaven.' Then the Deities Ashi-nadzu-chi and Te-nadzu-chi said: 'If that be so, with reverence will we offer her to thee.' So Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto, at once taking and changing the young girl into a close-toothed comb, which he stuck into his august hair-bunch, said to the Deities Ashi-nadzu-chi and Te-nadzu-chi: 'Do you distill some eightfold refined liquor. Also make a fence round about; in that fence make eight gates; at each gate tie a platform; on each platform put a liquor-vat; and into each vat pour the eightfold refined liquor, and wait.' So as they waited after having prepared everything in accordance with his bidding, the eight-forked serpent came and put a head into each vat and drank the liquor. Thereupon it was intoxicated, and all the heads lay down and slept. Then Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto drew the ten-grasp sabre that was augustly girded upon him, and cut the serpent in pieces, so that the River Hi flowed on changed into a river of blood.

"Then Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no-mikoto sought in the Land of Idzumo where he might build a palace.

"When this great Deity built the palace, clouds rose up thence. Then he made an august song:—

"*Ya-kumo tatsu:*
Idzumo ya-he-gaki;
Tsuma-gomi ni
Ya-he-gaki tsukuru:
Sono ya-he-gaki wo!" *

Now the temple of Yaegaki takes its name from the words of the august song Ya-he-gaki, and therefore signifies The Temple of the Eightfold Fence. And ancient commentators upon the sacred books have said that the name of Idzumo (which is now Izumo), as signifying the Land of the Issuing of Clouds, was also taken from that song of the god.**

II.

Sakusa, the hamlet where the Yaegaki-jinja stands, is scarcely more than one ri south from Matsue. But to go there one must follow tortuous paths too rough and steep for a kuruma; and of three ways, the longest and roughest happens to be the most interesting. It slopes up and down through bamboo groves and primitive woods, and again serpentines through fields of rice and barley, and plantations of indigo and of ginseng, where the scenery is always beautiful or odd. And there are many famed Shintō temples to be visited on the road, such as Take-uchi-jinja, dedicated to the venerable minister of the Empress Jingō,

* "Eight clouds arise. The eightfold (or, *manifold*) fence of Idzumo makes an eightfold (or, *manifold*) fence for the spouses to retire within. Oh! that eightfold fence!" This is said to be the oldest song in the Japanese language. It has been differently translated by the great scholars and commentators. The above version and text are from Professor B. H. Chamberlain's translation of the *Kōjiki* (pp. 60-64).

** Professor Chamberlain disputes this etymology for excellent reasons. But in Izumo itself the etymology is still accepted, and will be accepted, doubtless, until the results of foreign scholarship in the study of the archaic texts is more generally known.

Take-uchi, to whom men now pray for health and for length of years; and Okusa-no-miya, or Rokusho-jinja, of the five greatest shrines in Izumo; and Manai-jinja, sacred to Izanagi, the Mother of Gods, where strange pictures may be obtained of the Parents of the World; and Oba-no-miya, where Izanami is enshrined, also called Kamoshi-jinja, which means, "The Soul of the God."

At the Temple of the Soul of the God, where the sacred fire-drill used to be delivered each year with solemn rites to the great Kokuzō of Kitzuki, there are curious things to be seen,—a colossal grain of rice, more than an inch long, preserved from that period of the Kamiyō when the rice grew tall as the tallest tree and bore grains worthy of the gods; and a caldron of iron in which the peasants say that the first Kokuzō came down from heaven; and a cyclopean tōrō, formed of rocks so huge that one cannot imagine how they were ever balanced upon each other; and the Musical Stones of Oba, which chime like bells when smitten. There is a tradition that these cannot be carried away beyond a certain distance; for 'tis recorded that when a daimyō named Matsudaira ordered one of them to be conveyed to his castle at Matsue, the stone made itself so heavy that a thousand men could not move it farther than the Ohashi bridge. So it was abandoned before the bridge; and it lies there imbedded in the soil even unto this day.

All about Oba you may see many sekirei or wagtails,—birds sacred to Izanami and Izanagi,—for a legend says that from the sekirei the gods first learned the art of love. And none, not even the most avaricious farmer, ever hurts or terrifies these birds. So that they do not fear the people of Oba, nor the scarecrows in the fields.

The God of Scarecrows is Sukuna-biko-na-no-Kami.

III.

The path to Sakusa, for the last mile of the journey, at least, is extremely narrow, and has been paved by piety with large flat rocks laid upon the soil at intervals of about a foot, like an interminable line of stepping-stones. You cannot walk between them nor beside them, and you soon tire of walking upon them; but they have the merit of indicating the way, a matter of no small importance where fifty rice-field paths branch off from your own at all bewildering angles. After having been safely guided by these stepping-stones through all kinds of labyrinths in rice valleys and bamboo groves, one feels grateful to the peasantry for that clue-line of rocks. There are some quaint little shrines in the groves along this path, -shrines with curious carvings of dragons and of lion-heads and flowing water,—all wrought ages ago in good keyaki-wood,* which has become the colour of stone. But the eyes of the dragons and the lions have been stolen because they were made of fine crystal-quartz, and there was none to guard them, and because neither the laws nor the gods are quite so much feared now as they were before the period of Meiji.

Sakusa is a very small cluster of farmers' cottages before a temple at the verge of a wood,—the temple of Yaegaki. The stepping-stones of the path vanish into the pavement of the court, just before its lofty unpainted wooden torii. Between the torii and the inner court, entered by a Chinese gate, some grand old trees are growing, and there are queer monuments to see.

On either side of the great gateway is a shrine com-

* *Planeca Japonica.*

partment, inclosed by heavy wooden gratings on two sides; and in these compartments are two grim figures in complete armour, with bows in their hands and quivers of arrows upon their backs,—the Zuijin, or ghostly retainers of the gods, and guardians of the gate. Before nearly all the Shintō temples of Izumo, except Kitzuki, these Zuijin keep grim watch. They are probably of Buddhist origin; but they have acquired a Shintō history and Shintō names.* Originally, I am told, there was but one Zuijin-Kami, whose name was Toyo-kushi-iwa-ma-to-no-mikoto. But at a certain period both the god and his name were cut in two—perhaps for decorative purposes. And now he who sits upon the left is called Toyo-iwa-ma-to-no-mikoto; and his companion on the right, Kushi-iwa-ma-to-no-mikoto.

Before the gate, on the left side, there is a stone monument upon which is graven, in Chinese characters, a poem in Hokku, or verse of seventeen syllables, composed by Chō-un:—

Kō-ka-ra-shi-ya
Ka-mi-no-mi-yu-ki-no
Ya-ma-no-a-to.

My companion translates the characters thus:—"Where high heap the dead leaves, there is the holy place upon the hills, where dwell the gods." Near by are stone lanterns and stone lions, and another monument,—a great five-cornered slab set up and chiselled,—bearing the names in Chinese characters of the Ji-jin, or Earth-Gods, the Deities who protect the soil: Uga-no-mitama-no-mikoto (whose name signifies the August Spirit-of-Food), Ama-

* So absolutely has Shintō in Izumo monopolised the Karashishi, or stone lions, of Buddhist origin, that it is rare in the province to find a pair before any Buddhist temple. There is even a Shintō myth about their introduction into Japan from India, by the Fox-God!

terasu-oho-mi-Kami, Ona-muji-no-Kami, Kaki-yasu-hime-no-Kami, Sukuna-hiko-na-no-Kami (who is the Scarecrow God). And the figure of a fox in stone sits before the Name of the August Spirit-of-Food.

The miya or Shintō temple itself is quite small,—smaller than most of the temples in the neighbourhood, and dingy, and begrimed with age. Yet, next to Kitzuki, this is the most famous of Izumo shrines. The main shrine, dedicated to Susano-ō and Inada-hime and their son, whose name is the name of the hamlet of Sakusa, is flanked by various lesser shrines to left and right. In one of these smaller miya the spirit of Ashi-nadzu-chi, father of Inada-hime, is supposed to dwell; and in another that of Te-nadzu-chi, the mother of Inada-hime. There is also a small shrine of the Goddess of the Sun. But these shrines have no curious features. The main temple offers, on the other hand, some displays of rarest interest.

To the grey weather-worn gratings of the doors of the shrine hundreds and hundreds of strips of soft white paper have been tied in knots: there is nothing written upon them, although each represents a heart's wish and a fervent prayer. No prayers, indeed, are so fervent as those of love. Also there are suspended many little sections of bamboo, cut just below joints so as to form water receptacles: these are tied together in pairs with a small straw cord which also serves to hang them up. They contain offerings of sea-water carried here from no small distance. And mingling with the white confusion of knotted papers there dangle from the gratings many tresses of girls' hair—love-sacrifices*—and numerous offerings of seaweed, so filamentary and so sun-blackened

* Such offerings are called Gwan-hodoki. *Gwan wo hodoki*, "to make a vow."

that at some little distance it would not be easy to distinguish them from long shorn tresses. And all the woodwork of the doors and the gratings, both beneath and between the offerings, is covered with a speckling of characters graven or written, which are names of pilgrims. And my companion reads aloud the well-remembered name of—AKIRA!

If one dare judge the efficacy of prayer to these kind gods of Shintō from the testimony of their worshippers, I should certainly say that Akira has good reason to hope. Planted in the soil, all round the edge of the foundations of the shrine, are multitudes of tiny paper flags of curious shape (*nobori*), pasted upon splinters of bamboo. Each of these little white things is a banner of victory, and a lover's witness of gratitude.* You will find such little flags stuck into the ground about nearly all the great Shintō temples of Izumo. At Kitzuki they cannot even be counted—any more than the flakes of a snow-storm.

And here is something else that you will find at most of the famous miya in Izumo,—a box of little bamboo sticks, fastened to a post before the doors. If you were to count the sticks, you would find their number to be exactly one thousand. They are counters for pilgrims who make a vow to the gods to perform a sendo mairi. To perform a sendo-mairi means to visit the temple one thousand times. This, however, is so hard to do that busy pious men make a sort of compromise with the gods, thus: they walk from the shrine one foot beyond the gate,

* A pilgrim whose prayer has been heard usually plants a single nobori as a token. Sometimes you may see nobori of five colours (*goshiki*),—black, yellow, red, blue, and white,—of which one hundred or one thousand have been planted by one person. But this is done only in pursuance of some very special vow.

and back again to the shrine, one thousand times—all in one day, keeping count with the little splints of bamboo.

There is one more famous thing to be seen before visiting the holy grove behind the temple, and that is the Sacred Tama-tsubaki, or Precious-Camellia of Yaegaki. It stands upon a little knoll, fortified by a projection-wall, in a rice-field near the house of the priest; a fence has been built around it, and votive lamps of stone placed before it. It is of vast age, and has two heads and two feet; but the twin trunks grow together at the middle. Its unique shape, and the good quality of longevity it is believed to possess in common with all of its species, cause it to be revered as a symbol of undying wedded love, and as tenanted by the Kami who hearken to lovers' prayers, —en-musubi-no-kami.

There is, however, a strange superstition about tsubaki-trees; and this sacred tree of Yaegaki, in the opinion of some folk, is a rare exception to the general ghastliness of its species. For tsubaki-trees are goblin-trees, they say, and walk about at night; and there was one in the garden of a Matsue samurai which did this so much that it had to be cut down. Then it writhed its arms and groaned, and blood spurted at every stroke of the axe.

IV.

At the spacious residence of the kannushi some very curious ofuda and o-mamori—the holy talismans and charms of Yaegaki—are sold, together with pictures representing Take-haya-susa-no-wo-no mikoto and his bride Inada-hime surrounded by the "manifold fence" of clouds. On the pictures is also printed the august song whence the temple derives its name of Yaegaki-jinja,—"*Ya kumo tatsu Idzumo ya-he-gaki.*" Of the o mamori there is quite

a variety; but by far the most interesting is that labelled: *"Izumo-Yaegaki-jinja-en-musubi-on-hina"* (August wedlock-producing "hina" of the temple of Yaegaki of Izumo). This oblong, folded paper, with Chinese characters and the temple seal upon it, is purchased only by those in love, and is believed to assure nothing more than the desired union. Within the paper are two of the smallest conceivable doll-figures (*hina*), representing a married couple in antique costume,—the tiny wife folded to the breast of the tiny husband by one long-sleeved arm. It is the duty of whoever purchases this mamori to return it to the temple if he or she succeed in marrying the person beloved. As already stated, the charm is not supposed to assure anything more than the union: it cannot be accounted responsible for any consequences thereof. He who desires perpetual love must purchase another mamori labelled: *"Renri-tama-tsubaki-aikyo-goki-to-on-mamori"* (August amulet of august prayer-for-kindling-love of the jewel-precious tsubaki-tree-of-Union). This charm should maintain at constant temperature the warmth of affection; it contains only a leaf of the singular double bodied camellia-tree before mentioned. There are also small amulets for exciting love, and amulets for the expelling of diseases, but these have no special characteristics worth dwelling upon.

Then we take our way to the sacred grove, —the Okuno-in, or Mystic Shades of Yaegaki.

V.

This ancient grove—so dense that when you first pass into its shadows out of the sun all seems black—is composed of colossal cedars and pines, mingled with bamboo, tsubaki (*Camellia Japonica*), and sakaki, the sacred and

mystic tree of Shintō. The dimness is chiefly made by the huge bamboos. In nearly all sacred groves bamboos are thickly set between the trees, and their feathery foliage, filling every lofty opening between the heavier crests, entirely cuts off the sun. Even in a bamboo grove where no other trees are, there is always a deep twilight.

As the eyes become accustomed to this green gloaming, a pathway outlines itself between the trees,—a pathway wholly covered with moss, velvety, soft, and beautifully verdant. In former years, when all pilgrims were required to remove their footgear before entering the sacred grove, this natural carpet was a boon to the weary. The next detail one observes is that the trunks of many of the great trees have been covered with thick rush matting to a height of seven or eight feet, and that holes have been torn through some of the mats. All the giants of the grove are sacred; and the matting was bound about them to prevent pilgrims from stripping off their bark, which is believed to possess miraculous virtues. But many, more zealous than honest, do not hesitate to tear away the matting in order to get at the bark. And the third curious fact which you notice is that the trunks of the great bamboos are covered with ideographs,—with the wishes of lovers and the names of girls. There is nothing in the world of vegetation so nice to write a sweetheart's name upon as the polished bark of a bamboo: each letter, however lightly traced at first, enlarges and blackens with the growth of the bark, and never fades away.

The deeply mossed path slopes down to a little pond in the very heart of the grove,— a pond famous in the land of Izumo. Here there are many imori, or water-newts, about five inches long, which have red bellies. Here the shade is deepest, and the stems of the bamboos

most thickly tattooed with the names of girls. It is believed that the flesh of the newts in the sacred pond of Yaegaki possesses aphrodisiac qualities; and the body of the creature, reduced to ashes by burning, was formerly converted into love-powders. And there is a little Japanese song referring to the practice:—

*"Hore-gusuri hoka niwa naika to imori ni toeba, yubi-wo marumete kore bakari."**

The water is very clear; and there are many of these newts to be seen. And it is the custom for lovers to make a little boat of paper, and put into it one rin, and set it afloat, and watch it. So soon as the paper becomes wet through, and allows the water to enter it, the weight of the copper coin soon sends it to the bottom, where, owing to the purity of the water, it can be still seen distinctly as before. If the newts then approach and touch it, the lovers believe their happiness assured by the will of the gods; but if the newts do not come near it, the omen is evil. One poor little paper boat, I observe, could not sink at all; it simply floated to the inaccessible side of the pond, where the trees rise like a solid wall of trunks from the water's edge, and there became caught in some drooping branches. The lover who launched it must have departed sorrowing at heart.

Close to the pond, near the pathway, there are many camellia-bushes, of which the tips of the branches have been tied together, by pairs, with strips of white paper. These are shrubs of presage. The true lover must be able to bend two branches together, and to keep them united by tying a paper tightly about them,— all with the

* "On being asked if there were any other love charm, the Newt replied, making a ring with two of his toes, —'Only this.' The sign signifies, 'Money.'"

fingers of one hand. To do this well is good luck. Nothing is written upon the strips of paper.

But there is enough writing upon the bamboos to occupy curiosity for many an hour, in spite of the mosquitoes. Most of the names are yobi-na,—that is to say, pretty names of women; but there are likewise names of men,—jitsumyō;* and, oddly enough, a girl's name and a man's are in no instance written together. To judge by all this ideographic testimony, lovers in Japan—or at least in Izumo—are even more secretive than in our Occident. The enamoured youth never writes his own jitsumyo and his sweetheart's yobi-na together; and the family name, or myoji, he seldom ventures to inscribe. If he writes his jitsumyō, then he contents himself with whispering the yobi-na of his sweetheart to the gods and to the bamboos. If he cuts her yobi-na into the bark, then he substitutes for his own name a mention of his existence and his age only, as in this touching instance:—

Takata-Toki-to-en-musubi-negaimas.
*Jiu-hassai-no-otoko.***

This lover presumes to write his girl's whole name; but the example, so far as I am able to discover, is unique. Other enamoured ones write only the yobi-na of their bewitchers; and the honourable prefix, "O," and the

* There are no less than eleven principal kinds of Japanese names. The jitsumyō, or "true name," corresponds to our Christian name. On this intricate and interesting topic the reader should consult Professor B. H. Chamberlain's excellent little book, *Things Japanese*, pp. 250-255.

** "That I may be wedded to Takaki-Toki, I humbly pray.—A youth of eighteen."

honourable suffix, "San," find no place in the familiarity of love. There is no "O-Haru-San," "O-Kin-San," "O-Take-San," "O-Kiku-San;" but there are hosts of Haru, and Kin, and Take, and Kiku. Girls, of course, never dream of writing their lovers' names. But there are many geimyō here, "artistic names,"—names of mischievous geisha who worship the Golden Kitten, written by their saucy selves: Rakue and Asae and Wakai, Aikichi and Kotabuki and Kohachi, Kohana and Tamakichi and Katsuko, and Asakichi and Hanakichi and Katsukichi, and Chiyoe and Chiyotsuru. "Fortunate-Pleasure," "Happy-Dawn," and "Youth" (such are their appellations), "Blest-Love" and "Length-of-Days," and "Blossom-Child" and "Jewel-of-Fortune" and "Child-of-Luck," and "Joyous-Sunrise" and "Flower-of-Bliss" and "Glorious Victory," and "Life-as-the-Stork's-for-a-thousand-years." Often shall he curse the day he was born who falls in love with Happy-Dawn; thrice unlucky the wight bewitched by the Child-of-Luck; woe unto him who hopes to cherish the Flower-of-Bliss; and more than once shall he wish himself dead whose heart is snared by Life-as-the-Stork's-for-a-thousand-years. And I see that somebody who inscribes his age as twenty and three has become enamoured of young Wakagusa, whose name signifies the tender Grass of Spring. Now there is but one possible misfortune for you, dear boy, worse than falling in love with Wakagusa, —and that is that she should happen to fall in love with you. Because then you would, both of you, write some beautiful letters to your friends, and drink death, and pass away in each other's arms, murmuring your trust to rest together upon the same lotus-flower in Paradise: *"Hasu no ha no ue ni oite matsu."* Nay! pray the Deities rather to dissipate the bewitchment that is upon you:—

Te ni toru na,
Yahari no ni oke
*Gengebana.**

And here is a lover's inscription—in English! Who presumes to suppose that the gods know English? Some student, no doubt, who for pure shyness engraved his soul's secret in this foreign tongue of mine,—never dreaming that a foreign eye would look upon it. *"I wish You, Haru!"* Not once, but four—no, five times!—each time omitting the preposition. Praying—in this ancient grove—in this ancient Land of Izumo—unto the most ancient gods in English! Verily, the shyest love presumes much upon the forbearance of the gods. And great indeed must be, either the patience of Take-haya-susa no-wo-no-mikoto, or the rustiness of the ten-grasp sabre that was augustly girded upon him.

* The gengebana (also called renge-so, and in Izumo miakobana) is an herb planted only for fertilising purposes. Its flowers are extremely small, but so numerous that in their blossoming season miles of fields are coloured by them a beautiful lilaceous blue. A gentleman who wished to marry a joro despite the advice of his friends, was gently chided by them with the above little verse, which, freely translated, signifies: "Take it not into thy hand: the flowers of the gengebana are fair to view only when left all together in the field."

XI.

KITSUNE.

I.

By every shady wayside and in every ancient grove, on almost every hilltop and in the outskirts of every village, you may see, while travelling through the Hondo country, some little Shintō shrine, before which, or at either side of which, are images of seated foxes in stone. Usually there is a pair of these, facing each other. But there may be a dozen, or a score, or several hundred, in which case most of the images are very small. And in more than one of the larger towns you may see in the court of some great miya a countless host of stone foxes, of all dimensions, from toy-figures but a few inches high to the colossi whose pedestals tower above your head, all squatting around the temple in tiered ranks of thousands. Such shrines and temples, everybody knows, are dedicated to Inari, the God of Rice. After having travelled much in Japan, you will find that whenever you try to recall any country-place you have visited, there will appear in some nook or corner of that remembrance a pair of green-and-grey foxes of stone, with broken noses. In my own memories of Japanese travel, these shapes have become *de rigueur,* as picturesque detail.

In the neighbourhood of the capital and in Tokyō itself, — sometimes in the cemeteries, — very beautiful

idealised figures of foxes may be seen, elegant as greyhounds. They have long green or grey eyes of crystal quartz or some other diaphanous substance; and they create a strong impression as mythological conceptions. But throughout the interior, fox-images are much less artistically fashioned. In Izumo, particularly, such stone-carving has a decidedly primitive appearance. There is an astonishing multiplicity and variety of fox-images in the Province of the Gods,—images comical, quaint, grotesque, or monstrous, but, for the most part, very rudely chiselled. I cannot, however, declare them less interesting on that account. The work of the Tōkkaido sculptor copies the conventional artistic notion of light grace and ghostliness. The rustic foxes of Izumo have no grace: they are uncouth; but they betray in countless queer ways the personal fancies of their makers. They are of many moods,—whimsical, apathetic, inquisitive, saturnine, jocose, ironical; they watch and snooze and squint and wink and sneer; they wait with lurking smiles; they listen with cocked ears most stealthily, keeping their mouths open or closed. There is an amusing individuality about them all, and an air of knowing mockery about most of them, even those whose noses have been broken off. Moreover, these ancient country foxes have certain natural beauties which their modern Tōkyō kindred cannot show. Time has bestowed upon them divers speckled coats of beautiful soft colours while they have been sitting on their pedestals, listening to the ebbing and flowing of the centuries and snickering weirdly at mankind. Their backs are clad with finest green velvet of old mosses; their limbs are spotted and their tails are tipped with the dead gold or the dead silver of delicate fungi. And the places they most haunt are the loveliest,—high shadowy

groves where the uguisu sings in green twilight, above some voiceless shrine with its lamps and its lions of stone so mossed as to seem things born of the soil—like mushrooms.

I found it difficult to understand why, out of every thousand foxes, nine hundred should have broken noses. The main street of the city of Matsue might be paved from end to end with the tips of the noses of mutilated Izumo foxes. A friend answered my expression of wonder in this regard by the simple but suggestive word, *"Kodomo,"* which means, "The children."

II.

Inari, the name by which the Fox-God is generally known, signifies "Load-of-Rice." But the antique name of the Deity is the August-Spirit-of-Food: he is the Uka-no-mi-tama-no-mikoto of the Kojiki.* In much more recent times only has he borne the name that indicates his connection with the fox-cult, Miketsu-no-Kami, or the Three-Fox-God. Indeed, the conception of the fox as a supernatural being does not seem to have been introduced into Japan before the tenth or eleventh century; and although a shrine of the deity, with statues of foxes, may be found

* Toyo-uke-bime-no-Kami, or Uka-no-mi-tama (who has also eight other names), is a female divinity, according to the *Kojiki* and its commentators. Moreover, the greatest of all Shintō scholars, Hirata, as cited by Satow, says there is really no such god as Inari-San at all, —that the very name is an error. But the common people have created the *God* Inari: therefore he must be presumed to exist—if only for folklorists; and I speak of him as a male deity because I see him so represented in pictures and carvings. As to his mythological existence, his great and wealthy temple at Kyoto is impressive testimony.

in the court of most of the large Shintō temples, it is worthy of note that in all the vast domains of the oldest Shintō shrine in Japan—Kitzuki—you cannot find the image of a fox. And it is only in modern art—the art of Toyokuni and others—that Inari is represented as a bearded man riding a white fox.*

Inari is not worshipped as the God of Rice only; indeed, there are many Inari, just as in antique Greece there were many deities called Hermes, Zeus, Athena, Poseidon,—one in the knowledge of the learned, but essentially different in the imagination of the common people. Inari has been multiplied by reason of his different attributes. For instance, Matsue has a Kamiya-San-no-Inari-San, who is the God of Coughs and Bad Colds,—afflictions extremely common and remarkably severe in the Land of Izumo. He has a temple in the Kamachi at which he is worshipped under the vulgar appellation of Kaze-no-Kami and the politer one of Kamiya-San-no-Inari. And those who are cured of their coughs and colds after having prayed to him, bring to his temple offerings of tofu.

At Oba, likewise, there is a particular Inari, of great fame. Fastened to the wall of his shrine is a large box

* The white fox is a favourite subject with Japanese artists. Some very beautiful kakemono representing white foxes were on display at the Tokyo exhibition of 1890. Phosphorescent foxes often appear in the old coloured prints, now so rare and precious, made by artists whose names have become world-famous. Occasionally foxes are represented wandering about at night, with lambent tongues of dim fire—*kitsune-bi*—above their heads. The end of the fox's tail, both in sculpture and drawing, is ordinarily decorated with the symbolic jewel (*tama*) of old Buddhist art. I have in my possession one kakemono representing a white fox with a luminous jewel in its tail. I purchased it at the Matsue temple of Inari,—"O-Shiroyama-no-Inari-Sama." The art of the kakemono is clumsy; but the conception possesses curious interest.

full of small clay foxes. The pilgrim who has a prayer to make puts one of these little foxes in his sleeve and carries it home. He must keep it, and pay it all due honour, until such time as his petition has been granted. Then he must take it back to the temple, and restore it to the box, and, if he be able, make some small gift to the shrine.

Inari is often worshipped as a healer; and still more frequently as a deity having power to give wealth. (Perhaps because all the wealth of Old Japan was reckoned in koku of rice.) Therefore his foxes are sometimes represented holding keys in their mouths. And from being the deity who gives wealth, Inari has also become in some localities the special divinity of the jorō class. There is, for example, an Inari temple worth visiting in the neighbourhood of the Yoshiwara at Yokohama. It stands in the same court with a temple of Benten, and is more than usually large for a shrine of Inari. You approach it through a succession of torii, one behind the other: they are of different heights, diminishing in size as they are placed nearer to the temple, and planted more and more closely in proportion to their smallness. Before each torii sit a pair of weird foxes,—one to the right and one to the left. The first pair are large as greyhounds; the second two are much smaller; and the sizes of the rest lessen as the dimensions of the torii lessen. At the foot of the wooden steps of the temple there is a pair of very graceful foxes of dark grey stone, wearing pieces of red cloth about their necks. Upon the steps themselves are white wooden foxes,—one at each end of each step,—each successive pair being smaller than the pair below; and at the threshold of the doorway are two very little foxes, not more than three inches high, sitting on sky-

blue pedestals. These have the tips of their tails gilded. Then, if you look into the temple you will see on the left something like a long low table on which are placed thousands of tiny fox-images, even smaller than those in the doorway, having only plain white tails. There is no image of Inari; indeed, I have never seen an image of Inari as yet in any Inari temple. On the altar appear the usual emblems of Shintō; and before it, just opposite the doorway, stands a sort of lantern, having glass sides and a wooden bottom studded with nail-points on which to fix votive candles.*

And here, from time to time, if you will watch, you will probably see more than one handsome girl, with brightly painted lips and the beautiful antique attire that no maiden or wife may wear, come to the foot of the steps, toss a coin into the money-box at the door, and call out: *"O-rosoku!"* which means "an honourable candle." Immediately, from an inner chamber, some old man will enter the shrine-room with a lighted candle, stick it upon a nail point in the lantern, and then retire. Such candle-offerings are always accompanied by secret prayers for good-fortune. But this Inari is worshipped by many besides members of the jorō class.

The pieces of coloured cloth about the necks of the foxes are also votive offerings.

III.

Fox-images in Izumo seem to be more numerous than in other provinces, and they are symbols there, so far as the mass of the peasantry is concerned, of something else

* The Japanese candle has a large hollow paper wick. It is usually placed upon an iron point which enters into the orifice of the wick at the flat end.

besides the worship of the Rice-Deity. Indeed, the old conception of the Deity of Rice-fields has been overshadowed and almost effaced among the lowest classes by a weird cult totally foreign to the spirit of pure Shintō, —the Fox-cult. The worship of the retainer has almost replaced the worship of the god. Originally the Fox was sacred to Inari only as the Tortoise is still sacred to Kompira; the Deer to the Great Deity of Kasuga; the Rat to Daikoku; the Tai-fish to Ebisu; the White Serpent to Benten; or the Centipede to Bishamon, God of Battles. But in the course of centuries the Fox usurped divinity. And the stone images of him are not the only outward evidences of his cult. At the rear of almost every Inari temple you will generally find in the wall of the shrine building, one or two feet above the ground, an aperture about eight inches in diameter and perfectly circular. It is often made so as to be closed at will by a sliding plank. This circular orifice is a Fox-hole, and if you find one open, and look within, you will probably see offerings of tofu or other food which foxes are supposed to be fond of. You will also, most likely, find grains of rice scattered on some little projection of woodwork below or near the hole, or placed on the edge of the hole itself; and you may see some peasant clap his hands before the hole, utter some little prayer, and swallow a grain or two of that rice in the belief that it will either cure or prevent sickness. Now the fox for whom such a hole is made is an invisible fox, a phantom fox,—the fox respectfully referred to by the peasant as O Kitsune-San. If he ever suffers himself to become visible, his colour is said to be snowy white.

According to some, there are various kinds of ghostly foxes. According to others, there are two sorts of foxes

only, the Inari-fox (O-Kitsune-San) and the wild fox (*kitsune*). Some people again class foxes into Superior and Inferior Foxes, and allege the existence of four Superior Sorts,—Byakko, Kokko, Jenko, and Reiko,—all of which possess supernatural powers. Others again count only three kinds of foxes,—the Field-fox, the Man-fox, and the Inari-fox. But many confound the Field-fox or wild fox with the Man-fox, and others identify the Inari-fox with the Man-fox. One cannot possibly unravel the confusion of these beliefs, especially among the peasantry. The beliefs vary, moreover, in different districts. I have only been able, after a residence of fourteen months in Izumo, where the superstition is especially strong, and marked by certain unique features, to make the following very loose summary of them:—

All foxes have supernatural power. There are good and bad foxes. The Inari-fox is good, and the bad foxes are afraid of the Inari-fox. The worst fox is the Ninko or Hito-kitsune (Man-fox): this is especially the fox of demoniacal possession. It is no larger than a weasel, and somewhat similar in shape, except for its tail, which is like the tail of any other fox. It is rarely seen, keeping itself invisible, except to those to whom it attaches itself. It likes to live in the houses of men, and to be nourished by them, and to the homes where it is well cared for it will bring prosperity. It will take care that the rice-fields shall never want for water, nor the cooking-pot for rice. But if offended, it will bring misfortune to the household, and ruin to the crops. The wild fox (Nogitsune) is also bad. It also sometimes takes possession of people; but it is especially a wizard, and prefers to deceive by enchantment. It has the power of assuming any shape and of making itself invisible; but the dog can always see it,

so that it is extremely afraid of the dog. Moreover, while assuming another shape, if its shadow fall upon water, the water will only reflect the shadow of a fox. The peasantry kill it; but he who kills a fox incurs the risk of being bewitched by that fox's kindred, or even by the *ki,* or ghost of the fox. Still if one eat the flesh of a fox, he cannot be enchanted afterwards. The Nogitsune also enters houses. Most families having foxes in their houses have only the small kind, or Ninko; but occasionally both kinds will live together under the same roof. Some people say that if the Nogitsune lives a hundred years it becomes all white, and then takes rank as an Inari-fox.

There are curious contradictions involved in these beliefs, and other contradictions will be found in the following pages of this sketch. To define the fox-superstition at all is difficult, not only on account of the confusion of ideas on the subject among the believers themselves, but also on account of the variety of elements out of which it has been shapen. Its origin is Chinese;* but in Japan it became oddly blended with the worship of a Shinto deity, and again modified and expanded by the Buddhist concepts of thaumaturgy and magic. So far as the common people are concerned, it is perhaps safe to say that they pay devotion to foxes chiefly because they fear them. The peasant still worships what he fears.

IV.

It is more than doubtful whether the popular notions about different classes of foxes, and about the distinction between the fox of Inari and the fox of possession, were ever much more clearly established than they are now,

* See Professor Chamberlain's *Things Japanese,* under the title, "Demoniacal Possession."

except in the books of old *literati*. Indeed, there exists a letter from Hideyoshi to the Fox-God which would seem to show that in the time of the great Taikō the Inari-fox and the demon fox were considered identical. This letter is still preserved at Nara, in the Buddhist temple called Todaiji:—

KYŌTO, the seventeenth day
of the Third Month.

TO INARI DAIMYOJIN:—

My Lord, I have the honour to inform you that one of the foxes under your jurisdiction has bewitched one of my servants, causing her and others a great deal of trouble. I have to request that you will make minute enquiries into the matter, and endeavour to find out the reason of your subject misbehaving in this way, and let me know the result.

If it turns out that the fox has no adequate reason to give for his behaviour, you are to arrest and punish him at once. If you hesitate to take action in this matter, I shall issue orders for the destruction of every fox in the land.

Any other particulars that you may wish to be informed of in reference to what has occurred, you can learn from the high-priest YOSHIDA.

Apologising for the imperfections of this letter, I have the honour to be

Your obedient servant,
HIDEYOSHI TAIKŌ.*

But there certainly were some distinctions established in localities, owing to the worship of Inari by the military caste. With the samurai of Izumo, the Rice-God, for ob-

* Translated by Walter Dening.

vious reasons, was a highly popular deity; and you can still find in the garden of almost every old shizoku residence in Matsue, a small shrine of Inari Daimyōjin, with little stone foxes seated before it. And in the imagination of the lower classes, all samurai families possessed foxes. But the samurai foxes inspired no fear. They were believed to be "good foxes;" and the superstition of the Ninko or Hito-kitsune does not seem to have unpleasantly affected any samurai families of Matsue during the feudal era. It is only since the military caste has been abolished, and its name, simply as a body of gentry, changed to *shizoku,** that some families have become victims of the superstition through intermarriage with the *chōnin,* or mercantile classes, among whom the belief has always been strong.

By the peasantry the Matsudaira daimyō of Izumo were supposed to be the greatest fox-possessors. One of them was believed to use foxes as messengers to Tokyo (be it observed that a fox can travel, according to popular credence, from Yokohama to London in a few hours); and there is some Matsue story about a fox having been caught in a trap** near Tokyō, attached to whose neck was a letter written by the prince of Izumo only the same morning. The great Inari temple of Inari in the castle grounds, —O-Shiroyama-no-Inari-Sama, —with its thousands upon thousands of foxes of stone, is considered by the country people a striking proof of the devotion of the Matsudaira, not to Inari, but to foxes.

At present, however, it is no longer possible to es-

* The word *shizoku* is simply the Chinese for *samurai.* But the term now means little more than "gentleman" in England.

** The fox-messenger travels unseen. But if caught in a trap, or injured, his magic fails him, and he becomes visible.

tablish distinctions of genera in this ghostly zoology, where each species grows into every other. It is not even possible to disengage the *ki* or Soul of the Fox and the August-Spirit-of-Food from the confusion in which both have become hopelessly blended under the name Inari, by the vague conception of their peasant-worshippers. The old Shintō mythology is indeed quite explicit about the August-Spirit-of-Food, and quite silent upon the subject of foxes. But the peasantry in Izumo, like the peasantry of Catholic Europe, make mythology for themselves. If asked whether they pray to Inari as to an evil or a good deity, they will tell you that Inari is good, and that Inari-foxes are good. They will tell you of white foxes and dark foxes,—of foxes to be reverenced and foxes to be killed, - of the good fox which cries "kon-kon," and the evil fox which cries "kwai-kwai." But the peasant possessed by the fox cries out: *"I am Inari,—Tamabushi-no-Inari!"*—or some other Inari.

V.

Goblin foxes are peculiarly dreaded in Izumo for three evil habits attributed to them. The first is that of deceiving people by enchantment, either for revenge or pure mischief. The second is that of quartering themselves as retainers upon some family, and thereby making that family a terror to its neighbours. The third and worst is that of entering into people and taking diabolical possession of them and tormenting them into madness. This affliction is called "kitsune-tsuki."

The favourite shape assumed by the goblin fox for the purpose of deluding mankind is that of a beautiful woman; much less frequently the form of a young man is taken in order to deceive some one of the other sex.

Innumerable are the stories told or written about the wiles of fox-women. And a dangerous woman of that class whose art is to enslave men, and strip them of all they possess, is popularly named by a word of deadly insult, —*kitsune.*

Many declare that the fox never really assumes human shape; but that he only deceives people into the belief that he does so by a sort of magnetic power, or by spreading about them a certain magical effluvium.

The fox does not always appear in the guise of a woman for evil purposes. There are several stories, and one really pretty play, about a fox who took the shape of a beautiful woman, and married a man, and bore him children, —all out of gratitude for some favour received, —the happiness of the family being only disturbed by some odd carnivorous propensities on the part of the offspring. Merely to achieve a diabolical purpose, the form of a woman is not always the best disguise. There are men quite insusceptible to feminine witchcraft. But the fox is never at a loss for a disguise; he can assume more forms than Proteus. Furthermore, he can make you see or hear or imagine whatever he wishes you to see, hear, or imagine. He can make you see out of Time and Space; he can recall the past and reveal the future. His power has not been destroyed by the introduction of Western ideas; for did he not, only a few years ago, cause phantom trains to run upon the Tokkaido railway, thereby greatly confounding and terrifying the engineers of the company? But, like all goblins, he prefers to haunt solitary places. At night he is fond of making queer ghostly lights,* in semblance of lantern-fires, flit about dangerous places; and to protect yourself from this trick of his, it is

* The *Will-o'-the-wisp* is called *Kitsune-bi*, or "fox-fire."

necessary to learn that by joining your hands in a particular way, so as to leave a diamond-shaped aperture between the crossed fingers, you can extinguish the witch-fire at any distance simply by blowing through the aperture in the direction of the light and uttering a certain Buddhist formula.

But it is not only at night that the fox manifests his power for mischief: at high noon he may tempt you to go where you are sure to get killed, or frighten you into going by creating some apparition or making you imagine that you feel an earthquake. Consequently the old-fashioned peasant, on seeing anything extremely queer, is slow to credit the testimony of his own eyes. The most interesting and valuable witness of the stupendous eruption of Bandai-San in 1888—which blew the huge volcano to pieces and devastated an area of twenty-seven square miles, levelling forests, turning rivers from their courses, and burying numbers of villages with all their inhabitants was an old peasant who had watched the whole cataclysm from a neighbouring peak as unconcernedly as if he had been looking at a drama. He saw a black column of ashes and steam rise to the height of twenty thousand feet and spread out at its summit in the shape of an umbrella, blotting out the sun. Then he felt a strange rain pouring upon him, hotter than the water of a bath. Then all became black; and he felt the mountain beneath him shaking to its roots, and heard a crash of thunders that seemed like the sound of the breaking of a world. But he remained quite still until everything was over. He had made up his mind not to be afraid,—deeming that all he saw and heard was delusion wrought by the witchcraft of a fox.

VI.

Strange is the madness of those into whom demon foxes enter. Sometimes they run naked shouting through the streets. Sometimes they lie down and froth at the mouth, and yelp as a fox yelps. And on some part of the body of the possessed a moving lump appears under the skin, which seems to have a life of its own. Prick it with a needle, and it glides instantly to another place. By no grasp can it be so tightly compressed by a strong hand that it will not slip from under the fingers. Possessed folk are also said to speak and write languages of which they were totally ignorant prior to possession. They eat only what foxes are believed to like, —tofu, aburagé,* azukimeshi, etc.,—and they eat a great deal, alleging that not they, but the possessing foxes, are hungry.

It not unfrequently happens that the victims of fox-possession are cruelly treated by their relatives,—being severely burned and beaten in the hope that the fox may be thus driven away. Then the Hōin** or Yamabushi is sent for—the exorciser. The exorciser argues with the fox, who speaks through the mouth of the possessed. When the fox is reduced to silence by religious argument upon the wickedness of possessing people, he usually agrees to go away on condition of being supplied with

* *Aburagé* is a name given to fried bean-curds or tofu. *Azukimeshi* is a preparation of red beans boiled with rice.

** The Hōin or Yamabushi was a Buddhist exorciser, usually a priest. Strictly speaking, the Hōin was a Yamabushi of higher rank. The Yamabushi used to practise divination as well as exorcism. They were forbidden to exercise these professions by the present government; and most of the little temples formerly occupied by them have disappeared or fallen into ruin. But among the peasantry Buddhist exorcisers are still called to attend cases of fox-possession, and while acting as exorcisers are still spoken of as Yamabushi.

plenty of tofu or other food; and the food promised must be brought immediately to that particular Inari temple of which the fox declares himself a retainer. For the possessing fox, by whomsoever sent, usually confesses himself the servant of a certain Inari, though sometimes even calling himself the god.

As soon as the possessed has been freed from the possessor, he falls down senseless, and remains for a long time prostrate. And it is said, also, that he who has once been possessed by a fox will never again be able to eat tofu, aburagé, azukimeshi, or any of those things which foxes like.

VII.

It is believed that the Man-fox (Hito-kitsune) cannot be seen. But if he goes close to still water, his SHADOW can be seen in the water. Those "having foxes" are therefore supposed to avoid the vicinity of rivers and ponds.

The invisible fox, as already stated, attaches himself to persons. Like a Japanese servant, he belongs to the household. But if a daughter of that household marry, the fox not only goes to that new family, following the bride, but also *adopts* his kind in all those families related by marriage or kinship with the husband's family. Now every fox is supposed to have a family of seventy-five, —neither more nor less than seventy-five,—and all these must be fed. So that although such foxes, like ghosts, eat very little individually, it is expensive to have foxes. The fox-possessors (*kitsune-mochi*) must feed their foxes at regular hours; and the foxes always eat first all the seventy-five. As soon as the family rice is cooked in the kama (a great iron cooking-pot), the kitsune-mochi taps loudly on the side of the vessel, and uncovers it.

Then the foxes rise up through the floor. And although their eating is soundless to human ear and invisible to human eye, the rice slowly diminishes. Wherefore it is fearful for a poor man to have foxes.

But the cost of nourishing foxes is the least evil connected with the keeping of them. Foxes have no fixed code of ethics, and have proved themselves untrustworthy servants. They may initiate and long maintain the prosperity of some family; but should some grave misfortune fall upon that family in spite of the efforts of its seventy-five invisible retainers, then these will suddenly flee away, taking all the valuables of the household along with them. And all the fine gifts that foxes bring to their masters are things which have been stolen from somebody else. It is therefore extremely immoral to keep foxes. It is also dangerous for the public peace, inasmuch as a fox, being a goblin, and devoid of human susceptibilities, will not take certain precautions. He may steal the next-door neighbour's purse by night and lay it at his own master's threshold, so that if the next door neighbour happens to get up first and see it there is sure to be a row.

Another evil habit of foxes is that of making public what they hear said in private, and taking it upon themselves to create undesirable scandal. For example, a fox attached to the family of Kobayashi San hears his master complain about his neighbour Nakayama San, whom he secretly dislikes. Therewith the zealous retainer runs to the house of Nakayama San, and enters into his body, and torments him grievously, saying: "I am the retainer of Kobayashi San to whom you did such and-such a wrong; and until such time as he command me to depart, I shall continue to torment you."

And last, but worst of all the risks of possessing foxes, is the danger that they may become wroth with some member of the family. Certainly a fox may be a good friend, and make rich the home in which he is domiciled. But as he is not human, and as his motives and feelings are not those of men, but of goblins, it is difficult to avoid incurring his displeasure. At the most unexpected moment he may take offence without any cause knowingly having been given, and there is no saying what the consequences may be. For the fox possesses Instinctive Infinite Vision,—and the Ten-Ni Tsun, or All-Hearing Ear, —and the Ta-Shin-Tsun, which is the Knowledge of the Most Secret Thoughts of Others, —and Shiyuku-Mei Tsun, which is the Knowledge of the Past,—and Zhin-Kiyan-Tsun, which means the Knowledge of the Universal Present, —and also the Powers of Transformation and of Transmutation.* So that even without including his special powers of bewitchment, he is by nature a being almost omnipotent for evil.

VIII.

For all these reasons, and doubtless many more, people believed to have foxes are shunned. Intermarriage with a fox-possessing family is out of the question; and many a beautiful and accomplished girl in Izumo cannot secure a husband because of the popular belief that her family harbours foxes. As a rule, Izumo girls do not like to marry out of their own province; but the daughters

* A most curious paper on the subject of *Tengan*, or Infinite Vision, being the translation of a Buddhist sermon by the priest Sata Kaiseki, appeared in vol. VII. of the *Transactions* of the Asiatic Society of Japan, from the pen of Mr. J. M. James. It contains an interesting consideration of the supernatural powers of the Fox.

of a kitsune-mochi must either marry into the family of another kitsune-mochi, or find a husband far away from the Province of the Gods. Rich fox-possessing families have not overmuch difficulty in disposing of their daughters by one of the means above indicated; but many a fine sweet girl of the poorer kitsune-mochi is condemned by superstition to remain unwedded. It is not because there are none to love her and desirous of marrying her, —young men who have passed through public schools and who do not believe in foxes. It is because popular superstition cannot be yet safely defied in country districts except by the wealthy. The consequences of such defiance would have to be borne, not merely by the husband, but by his whole family, and by all other families related thereunto. Which are consequences to be thought about!

Among men believed to have foxes there are some who know how to turn the superstition to good account. The country-folk, as a general rule, are afraid of giving offence to a kitsune-mochi, lest he should send some of his invisible servants to take possession of them. Accordingly, certain kitsune-mochi have obtained great ascendency over the communities in which they live. In the town of Yonago, for example, there is a certain prosperous chonin whose will is almost law, and whose opinions are never opposed. He is practically the ruler of the place, and in a fair way of becoming a very wealthy man. All because he is thought to have foxes.

Wrestlers, as a class, boast of their immunity from fox-possession, and care neither for kitsune-mochi nor for their spectral friends. Very strong men are believed to be proof against all such goblinry. Foxes are said to

be afraid of them, and instances are cited of a possessing fox declaring: "I wished to enter into your brother, but he was too strong for me; so I have entered into you, as I am resolved to be revenged upon some one of your family."

IX.

Now the belief in foxes does not affect persons only: it affects property. It affects the value of real estate in Izumo to the amount of hundreds of thousands.

The land of a family supposed to have foxes cannot be sold at a fair price. People are afraid to buy it; for it is believed the foxes may ruin the new proprietor. The difficulty of obtaining a purchaser is most great in the case of land terraced for rice-fields, in the mountain districts. The prime necessity of such agriculture is irrigation, — irrigation by a hundred ingenious devices, always in the face of difficulties. There are seasons when water becomes terribly scarce, and when the peasants will even fight for water. It is feared that on lands haunted by foxes, the foxes may turn the water away from one field into another, or, for spite, make holes in the dikes and so destroy the crop.

There are not wanting shrewd men to take advantage of this queer belief. One gentleman of Matsue, a good agriculturalist of the modern school, speculated in the fox terror fifteen years ago, and purchased a vast tract of land in eastern Izumo which no one else would bid for. That land has sextupled in value, besides yielding generously under his system of cultivation, and by selling it now he could realise an immense fortune. His success, and the fact of his having been an official of the government, broke the spell: it is no longer believed that his farms are fox-haunted. But success alone could not have

freed the soil from the curse of the superstition. The power of the farmer to banish the foxes was due to his official character. With the peasantry, the word "Government" is talismanic.

Indeed, the richest and the most successful farmer of Izumo, worth more than a hundred thousand yen,—Wakuri-San of Chinomiya in Kandegori,—is almost universally believed by the peasantry to be a kitsune-mochi. They tell curious stories about him. Some say that when a very poor man he found in the woods one day a little white fox-cub, and took it home, and petted it, and gave it plenty of tofu, adzukimeshi, and aburagé,—three sorts of food which foxes love,—and that from that day prosperity came to him. Others say that in his house there is a special zashiki, or guest room for foxes; and that there, once in each month, a great banquet is given to hundreds of Hito-kitsune. But Chinomiya no-Wakuri, as they call him, can afford to laugh at all these tales. He is a refined man, highly respected in cultivated circles where superstition never enters.

X.

When a Ninko comes to your house at night and knocks, there is a peculiar muffled sound about the knocking by which you can tell that the visitor is a fox—if you have experienced ears. For a fox knocks at doors with its tail. If you open, then you will see a man, or perhaps a beautiful girl, who will talk to you only in fragments of words, but nevertheless in such a way that you can perfectly well understand. A fox cannot pronounce a whole word, but a part only,—as *"Nish . . . Sa . . ."* for *"Nishida-San;"* *"degoz . . ."* for *"degozarimasu;"* or *"uch . . . de . . . ?"* for *"uchi desŭka?"* Then, if you

are a friend of foxes, the visitor will present you with a little gift of some sort, and at once vanish away into the darkness. Whatever the gift may be, it will seem much larger that night than in the morning. Only a part of a fox-gift is real.

A Matsue shizoku, going home one night by way of the street called Horomachi, saw a fox running for its life pursued by dogs. He beat the dogs off with his umbrella, thus giving the fox a chance to escape. On the following evening he heard someone knock at his door, and on opening the *to* saw a very pretty girl standing there, who said to him: "Last night I should have died but for your august kindness. I know not how to thank you enough: this is only a pitiable little present." And she laid a small bundle at his feet and went away. He opened the bundle and found two beautiful ducks and two pieces of silver money,—those long, heavy, leaf shaped pieces of money, each worth ten or twelve dollars,—such as are now eagerly sought for by collectors of antique things. After a little while, one of the coins changed before his eyes into a piece of grass: the other was always good.

Sugitean San, a physician of Matsue, was called one evening to attend a case of confinement at a house some distance from the city, on the hill called Shiragayama. He was guided by a servant carrying a paper lantern painted with an aristocratic crest.* He entered into a magnificent house, where he was received with superb samurai courtesy. The mother was safely delivered of a fine boy. The family treated the physician to an excellent dinner, entertained him elegantly, and sent him home, loaded with presents and money. Next day he

* All the portable lanterns used to light the way upon dark nights bear a *mon* or crest of the owner.

went, according to Japanese etiquette, to return thanks to his hosts. He could not find the house: there was, in fact, nothing on Shiragayama except forest. Returning home, he examined again the gold which had been paid to him. All was good except one piece, which had changed into grass.

XI.

Curious advantages have been taken of the superstitions relating to the Fox-God.

In Matsue, several years ago, there was a tofuya which enjoyed an unusually large patronage. A tofuya is a shop where tofu is sold,—a curd prepared from beans, and much resembling good custard in appearance. Of all eatable things, foxes are most fond of tofu and of soba, which is a preparation of buckwheat. There is even a legend that a fox, in the semblance of an elegantly attired man, once visited Nogi-no-Kuriharaya, a popular sobaya on the lake shore, and ate much soba. But after the guest was gone, the money he had paid changed into wooden shavings.

The proprietor of the tofuya had a different experience. A man in wretched attire used to come to his shop every evening to buy a chō of tofu, which he devoured on the spot with the haste of one long famished. Every evening for weeks he came, and never spoke; but the landlord saw one evening the tip of a bushy white tail protruding from beneath the stranger's rags. The sight aroused strange surmises and weird hopes. From that night he began to treat the mysterious visitor with obsequious kindness. But another month passed before the latter spoke. Then what he said was about as follows:—

"Though I seem to you a man, I am not a man; and I took upon myself human form only for the purpose of

visiting you. I come from Taka-machi, where my temple is, at which you often visit. And being desirous to reward your piety and goodness of heart, I have come to-night to save you from a great danger. For by the power which I possess I know that to-morrow this street will burn, and all the houses in it shall be utterly destroyed except yours. To save it I am going to make a charm. But in order that I may do this, you must open your go down (*kura*) that I may enter, and allow no one to watch me; for should living eye look upon me there, the charm will not avail."

The shopkeeper, with fervent words of gratitude, opened his storehouse, and reverently admitted the seeming Inari, and gave orders that none of his household or servants should keep watch. And these orders were so well obeyed that all the stores within the storehouse, and all the valuables of the family, were removed without hindrance during the night. Next day the kura was found to be empty. And there was no fire.

There is also a well authenticated story about another wealthy shopkeeper of Matsue who easily became the prey of another pretended Inari. This Inari told him that whatever sum of money he should leave at a certain miya by night, he would find it doubled in the morning,—as the reward of his lifelong piety. The shopkeeper carried several small sums to the miya, and found them doubled within twelve hours. Then he deposited larger sums, which were similarly multiplied; he even risked some hundreds of dollars, which were duplicated. Finally he took all his money out of the bank and placed it one evening within the shrine of the god,—and never saw it again.

XII.

Vast is the literature of the subject of foxes,—ghostly

foxes. Some of it is old as the eleventh century. In the ancient romances and the modern cheap novel, in historical traditions and in popular fairy-tales, foxes perform wonderful parts. There are very beautiful and very sad and very terrible stories about foxes. There are legends of foxes discussed by great scholars, and legends of foxes known to every child in Japan,—such as the history of Tamamonomae, the beautiful favourite of the Emperor Toba,—Tamamonomae, whose name has passed into a proverb, and who proved at last to be only a demon fox with Nine Tails and Fur of Gold. But the most interesting part of fox-literature belongs to the Japanese stage, where the popular beliefs are often most humorously reflected,—as in the following excerpts from the comedy of Hiza-Kuruge, written by one Jippensha Ikku:—

[Kidahachi and Iyaji are travelling from Yedo to Ōsaka. When within a short distance of Akasaka, Kidahachi hastens on in advance to secure good accommodations at the best inn. Iyaji, travelling along leisurely, stops a little while at a small wayside refreshment-house kept by an old woman.]

OLD WOMAN. Please take some tea, sir.

IYAJI. Thank you! How far is it from here to the next town? Akasaka?

OLD WOMAN. About one ri. But if you have no companion, you had better remain here to-night, because there is a bad fox on the way, who bewitches travellers.

IYAJI. I am afraid of that sort of thing. But I must go on; for my companion has gone on ahead of me, and will be waiting for me.

[After having paid for his refreshments, Iyaji proceeds on his way. The night is very dark, and he feels quite nervous on account of what the old woman has told him. After having walked a considerable distance, he suddenly hears a fox yelping, *kon-kon*. Feeling still more afraid, he shouts at the top of his voice:—]

IYAJI. Come near me, and I will kill you!

[Meanwhile Kidahachi, who has also been frightened by the old woman's stories, and has therefore determined to wait for Iyaji, is saying to himself in the dark: "If I do not wait for him, we shall certainly be deluded." Suddenly he hears Iyaji's voice, and cries out to him:—]

KIDAHACHI. O Iyaji-San!

IYAJI. What are you doing there?

KIDAHACHI. I did intend to go on ahead; but I became afraid, and so I concluded to stop here and wait for you.

IYAJI (*who imagines that the fox has taken the shape of Kidahachi to deceive him*). Do not think that you are going to dupe me?

KIDAHACHI. That is a queer way to talk! I have some nice mochi* here which I bought for you.

IYAJI. Horse-dung cannot be eaten!**

KIDAHACHI. Don't be suspicious! I am really Kidahachi.

IYAJI (*springing upon him furiously*). Yes! you took the form of Kidahachi just to deceive me!

KIDAHACHI. What do you mean? What are you going to do to me?

IYAJI. I am going to kill you! (*Throws him down.*)

KIDAHACHI. Oh! you have hurt me very much—please leave me alone!

IYAJI. If you are really hurt, then let me see you in your real shape! (*They struggle together.*)

KIDAHACHI. What are you doing?—putting your hand there?

IYAJI. I am feeling for your tail. If you don't put out your tail at once, I shall make you! (*Takes his towel, and with it ties Kidahachi's hands behind his back, and then draws him before him.*)

KIDAHACHI. Please untie me—please untie me first!

[By this time they have *almost* reached Akasaka, and Iyaji, seeing a dog, calls the animal, and drags Kidahachi close to it; for a dog is believed to be able to detect a fox through any disguise. But the dog takes no notice of Kidahachi. Iyaji therefore unties him, and apologises; and they both laugh at their previous fears.]

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* Cakes made of rice flour and often sweetened with sugar.

** It is believed that foxes amuse themselves by causing people to eat horse-dung in the belief that they are eating mochi, or to enter a cesspool in the belief they are taking a bath.

XIII.

But there are some very pleasing forms of the Fox-God.

For example, there stands in a very obscure street of Matsue—one of those streets no stranger is likely to enter unless he loses his way—a temple called Jigyōba-no-Inari,* and also Kodomo-no-Inari, or "the Children's Inari." It is very small, but very famous; and it has been recently presented with a pair of new stone foxes, very large, which have gilded teeth and a peculiarly playful expression of countenance. These sit one on each side of the gate: the Male grinning with open jaws, the Female demure, with mouth closed.** In the court you will find many ancient little foxes with noses, heads, or tails broken, two great Karashishi before which straw sandals (*waraji*) have been suspended as votive offerings by somebody with sore feet who has prayed to the Karashishi-Sama that they will heal his affliction, and a shrine of Kōjin, occupied by the corpses of many children's dolls.***

* In Jigyōbamachi, a name signifying "earthwork-street." It stands upon land reclaimed from swamp.

** This seems to be the immemorial artistic law for the demeanour of all symbolic guardians of holy places, such as the Karashishi, and the Ascending and Descending Dragons carved upon panels, or pillars. At Kumano temple even the Suijin, or warrior-guardians, who frown behind the gratings of the chambers of the great gateway, are thus represented—one with mouth open, the other with closed lips.

On enquiring about the origin of this distinction between the two symbolic figures, I was told by a young Buddhist scholar that the male figure in such representations is supposed to be pronouncing the sound "A," and the figure with closed lips the sound of nasal "N," —corresponding to the Alpha and Omega of the Greek alphabet, and also emblematic of the Beginning and the End. In the Lotos of the Good Law, Buddha so reveals himself, as the cosmic Alpha and Omega, and the Father of the World,—like Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

*** There is one exception to the general custom of giving the dolls

The grated doors of the shrine of Jigyōba-no-Inari, like those of the shrine of Yaegaki, are white with the multitude of little papers tied to them, which papers signify prayers. But the prayers are special and curious. To right and to left of the doors, and also above them, odd little votive pictures are pasted upon the walls, mostly representing children in bath-tubs, or children getting their heads shaved. There are also one or two representing children at play. Now the interpretation of these signs and wonders is as follows:—

Doubtless you know that Japanese children, as well as Japanese adults, must take a hot bath every day; also that it is the custom to shave the heads of very small boys and girls. But in spite of hereditary patience and strong ancestral tendency to follow ancient custom, young children find both the razor and the hot bath difficult to endure, with their delicate skins. For the Japanese hot bath is very hot (not less than 110° F., as a general rule), and even the adult foreigner must learn slowly to bear it, and to appreciate its hygienic value. Also, the Japanese razor is a much less perfect instrument than ours, and is used without any lather, and is apt to hurt a little unless used by the most skilful hands. And finally, Japanese parents are not tyrannical with their children: they pet and coax, very rarely compel or terrify. So that it is quite a dilemma for them when the baby revolts against the bath or mutinies against the razor.

The parents of the child who refuses to be shaved or bathed have recourse to Jigyoba-no-Inari. The god is

of dead children, or the wrecks of dolls, to Kojin. Those images of the God of Calligraphy and Scholarship which are always presented as gifts to boys on the Boys' Festival are given, when broken, to Tenjin himself, not to Kōjin: at least such is the custom in Matsue.

besought to send one of his retainers to amuse the child, and reconcile it to the new order of things, and render it both docile and happy. Also if a child is naughty, or falls sick, this Inari is appealed to. If the prayer be granted, some small present is made to the temple—sometimes a votive picture, such as those pasted by the door, representing the successful result of the petition. To judge by the number of such pictures, and by the prosperity of the temple, the Kodomo-no-Inari would seem to deserve his popularity. Even during the few minutes I passed in his court I saw three young mothers, with infants at their backs, come to the shrine and pray and make offerings. I noticed that one of the children—remarkably pretty—had never been shaved at all. This was evidently a very obstinate case.

While returning from my visit to the Jigyōba Inari, my Japanese servant, who had guided me there, told me this story: The son of his next-door neighbour, a boy of seven, went out to play one morning, and disappeared for two days. The parents were not at first uneasy, supposing that the child had gone to the house of a relative, where he was accustomed to pass a day or two from time to time. But on the evening of the second day it was learned that the child had not been at the house in question. Search was at once made; but neither search nor enquiry availed. Late at night, however, a knock was heard at the door of the boy's dwelling, and the mother, hurrying out, found her truant fast asleep on the ground. She could not discover who had knocked. The boy, upon being awakened, laughed, and said that on the morning of his disappearance he had met a lad of about his own age, with very pretty eyes, who had coaxed him away to

the woods, where they had played together all day and night and the next day at very curious funny games. But at last he got sleepy, and his comrade took him home. He was not hungry. The comrade promised "to come to-morrow."

But the mysterious comrade never came; and no boy of the description given lived in the neighbourhood. The inference was that the comrade was a fox who wanted to have a little fun. The subject of the fun mourned long in vain for his merry companion.

XIV.

Some thirty years ago there lived in Matsue an ex-wrestler named Tobikawa, who was a relentless enemy of foxes and used to hunt and kill them. He was popularly believed to enjoy immunity from bewitchment because of his immense strength; but there were some old folks who predicted that he would not die a natural death. This prediction was fulfilled: Tobikawa died in a very curious manner. He was excessively fond of practical jokes. One day he disguised himself as a Tengu, or sacred goblin, with wings and claws and long nose, and ascended a lofty tree in a sacred grove near Rakusan, whither, after a little while, the innocent peasants thronged to worship him with offerings. While diverting himself with this spectacle, and trying to play his part by springing nimbly from one branch to another, he missed his footing and broke his neck in the fall.

XV.

But these strange beliefs are swiftly passing away. Year by year more shrines of Inari crumble down, never to be rebuilt. Year by year the statuaries make fewer

images of foxes. Year by year fewer victims of fox-possession are taken to the hospitals to be treated according to the best scientific methods by Japanese physicians who speak German. The cause is not to be found in the decadence of the old faiths: a superstition outlives a religion. Much less is it to be sought for in the efforts of proselytising missionaries from the West,—most of whom profess an earnest belief in devils. It is purely educational. The omnipotent enemy of superstition is the public school, where the teaching of modern science is unclogged by sectarianism or prejudice; where the children of the poorest may learn the wisdom of the Occident; where there is not a boy or a girl of fourteen ignorant of the great names of Tyndall, of Darwin, of Huxley, of Herbert Spencer. The little hands that break the Fox-god's nose in mischievous play can also write essays upon the evolution of plants and about the geology of Izumo. There is no place for ghostly foxes in the beautiful nature-world revealed by new studies to the new generation. The omnipotent exorciser and reformer is the Kodomo.

XII.

IN A JAPANESE GARDEN.

I.

My little two-storey house by the Ohashigawa, although dainty as a bird-cage, proved much too small for comfort at the approach of the hot season,—the rooms being scarcely higher than steamship cabins, and so narrow that an ordinary mosquito net could not be suspended in them. I was sorry to lose the beautiful lake view, but I found it necessary to remove to the northern quarter of the city, into a very quiet street behind the mouldering castle. My new home is a katchiu-yashiki, the ancient residence of some samurai of high rank. It is shut off from the street, or rather roadway, skirting the castle moat by a long, high wall coped with tiles. One ascends to the gateway, which is almost as large as that of a temple court, by a low broad flight of stone steps; and projecting from the wall, to the right of the gate, is a lookout window, heavily barred, like a big wooden cage. Thence, in feudal days, armed retainers kept keen watch on all who passed by, invisible watch, for the bars are set so closely that a face behind them cannot be seen from the roadway. Inside the gate the approach to the dwelling is also walled in on both sides, so that the visitor, unless privileged, could see before him only the house entrance, always closed with white shoji. Like all samurai homes,

the residence itself is but one storey high, but there are fourteen rooms within, and these are lofty, spacious, and beautiful. There is, alas, no lake view nor any charming prospect. Part of the O-Shiroyama, with the castle on its summit, half concealed by a park of pines, may be seen above the coping of the front wall, but only a part; and scarcely a hundred yards behind the house rise densely wooded heights, cutting off not only the horizon, but a large slice of the sky as well. For this immurement, however, there exists fair compensation in the shape of a very pretty garden, or rather a series of garden spaces, which surround the dwelling on three sides. Broad verandas overlook these, and from a certain veranda angle I can enjoy the sight of two gardens at once. Screens of bamboos and woven rushes, with wide gateless openings in their midst, mark the boundaries of the three divisions of the pleasure-grounds. But these structures are not intended to serve as true fences; they are ornamental, and only indicate where one style of landscape gardening ends and another begins.

II.

Now a few words upon Japanese gardens in general.

After having learned — merely by seeing, for the practical knowledge of the art requires years of study and experience, besides a natural, instinctive sense of beauty — something about the Japanese manner of arranging flowers, one can thereafter consider European ideas of floral decoration only as vulgarities. This observation is not the result of any hasty enthusiasm, but a conviction settled by long residence in the interior. I have come to understand the unspeakable loveliness of a solitary spray of blossoms arranged as only a Japanese expert knows

how to arrange it,—not by simply poking the spray into a vase, but by perhaps one whole hour's labour of trimming and posing and daintiest manipulation,—and therefore I cannot think now of what we Occidentals call a "bouquet" as anything but a vulgar murdering of flowers, an outrage upon the colour-sense, a brutality, an abomination. Somewhat in the same way, and for similar reasons, after having learned what an old Japanese garden is, I can remember our costliest gardens at home only as ignorant displays of what wealth can accomplish in the creation of incongruities that violate nature.

Now a Japanese garden is not a flower garden; neither is it made for the purpose of cultivating plants. In nine cases out of ten there is nothing in it resembling a flower-bed. Some gardens may contain scarcely a sprig of green; some have nothing green at all, and consist entirely of rocks and pebbles and sand, although these are exceptional.* As a rule, a Japanese garden is a landscape garden, yet its existence does not depend upon any fixed allowance of space. It may cover one acre or many acres. It may also be only ten feet square. It may, in extreme cases, be much less; for a certain kind of Japanese garden can be contrived small enough to put in a tokonoma. Such a garden, in a vessel no larger than a fruit-dish, is called koniwa or toko-niwa, and may occasionally be seen in the tokonoma of humble little dwellings so closely squeezed between other structures as to possess no ground

* Such as the garden attached to the abbot's palace at Tokuwa-monji, cited by Mr. Conder, which was made to commemorate the legend of stones which bowed themselves in assent to the doctrine of Buddha. At Togo-ike, in Tottori-ken, I saw a very large garden consisting almost entirely of stones and sand. The impression which the designer had intended to convey was that of approaching the sea over a verge of dunes, and the illusion was beautiful.

in which to cultivate an outdoor garden. (I say "an outdoor garden," because there are indoor gardens, both upstairs and downstairs, in some large Japanese houses.) The toko-niwa is usually made in some curious bowl, or shallow carved box, or quaintly shaped vessel impossible to describe by any English word. Therein are created minuscule hills with minuscule houses upon them, and microscopic ponds and rivulets spanned by tiny humped bridges; and queer wee plants do duty for trees, and curiously formed pebbles stand for rocks, and there are tiny toro, perhaps a tiny torii as well,—in short, a charming and living model of a Japanese landscape.

Another fact of prime importance to remember is that, in order to comprehend the beauty of a Japanese garden, it is necessary to understand—or at least to learn to understand—the beauty of stones. Not of stones quarried by the hand of man, but of stones shaped by nature only. Until you can feel, and keenly feel, that stones have character, that stones have tones and values, the whole artistic meaning of a Japanese garden cannot be revealed to you. In the foreigner, however æsthetic he may be, this feeling needs to be cultivated by study. It is inborn in the Japanese; the soul of the race comprehends Nature infinitely better than we do, at least in her visible forms. But although, being an Occidental, the true sense of the beauty of stones can be reached by you only through long familiarity with the Japanese use and choice of them, the characters of the lessons to be acquired exist everywhere about you, if your life be in the interior. You cannot walk through a street without observing tasks and problems in the æsthetics of stones for you to master. At the approaches to temples, by the side of roads, before holy groves, and in all parks and pleasure grounds,

as well as in all cemeteries, you will notice large, irregular, flat slabs of natural rock — mostly from the river beds and water-worn — sculptured with ideographs, but unhewn. These have been set up as votive tablets, as commemorative monuments, as tombstones, and are much more costly than the ordinary cut-stone columns and haka chiselled with the figures of divinities in relief. Again, you will see before most of the shrines, nay, even in the grounds of nearly all large homesteads, great irregular blocks of granite or other hard rock, worn by the action of torrents, and converted into water basins (*chodzu-bachi*) by cutting a circular hollow in the top. Such are but common examples of the utilisation of stones even in the poorest villages; and if you have any natural artistic sentiment, you cannot fail to discover, sooner or later, how much more beautiful are these natural forms than any shapes from the hand of the stone-cutter. It is probable, too, that you will become so habituated at last to the sight of inscriptions cut upon rock surfaces, especially if you travel much through the country, that you will often find yourself involuntarily looking for texts or other chiselings where there are none, and could not possibly be, as if ideographs belonged by natural law to rock formation. And stones will begin, perhaps, to assume for you a certain individual or physiognomical aspect, to suggest moods and sensations, as they do to the Japanese. Indeed, Japan is particularly a land of suggestive shapes in stone, as high volcanic lands are apt to be; and such shapes doubtless addressed themselves to the imagination of the race at a time long prior to the date of that archaic text which tells of demons in Izumo "who made rocks, and the roots of trees, and leaves, and the foam of the green waters to speak."

As might be expected in a country where the sug-

gestiveness of natural forms is thus recognised, there are in Japan many curious beliefs and superstitions concerning stones. In almost every province there are famous stones supposed to be sacred or haunted, or to possess miraculous powers, such as the Women's Stone at the temple of Hachiman at Kamakura, and the Sessho-seki, or Death Stone of Nasu, and the Wealth-giving Stone at Enoshima, to which pilgrims pay reverence. There are even legends of stones having manifested sensibility, like the tradition of the Nodding Stones which bowed down before the monk Daita when he preached unto them the word of Buddha; or the ancient story from the Kojiki, that the Emperor O-Jin, being augustly intoxicated, "smote with his august staff a great stone in the middle of the Ohosaka road, *whereupon the stone ran away!*"*

Now stones are valued for their beauty; and large stones selected for their shape may have an æsthetic worth of hundreds of dollars. And large stones form the skeleton, or framework, in the design of old Japanese gardens. Not only is every stone chosen with a view to its particular expressiveness of form, but every stone in the garden or about the premises has its separate and individual name, indicating its purpose or its decorative duty. But I can tell you only a little, a very little, of the folk-lore of a Japanese garden; and if you want to know more about stones and their names, and about the philosophy of gardens, read the unique essay of Mr. Conder on the Art of Landscape Gardening in Japan,** and his beautiful

* The *Kojiki*, translated by Professor B. H. Chamberlain, p. 254.

** Since this paper was written, Mr. Conder has published a beautiful illustrated volume,—"Landscape Gardening in Japan. By Josiah Conder, F. R. I., B. A. Tokyo: 1893." A photographic supplement to the work gives views of the most famous gardens in the capital and elsewhere.

book on the Japanese Art of Floral Decoration; and also the brief but charming chapter on Gardens, in Morse's Japanese Homes.*

III.

No effort to create an impossible or purely ideal landscape is made in the Japanese garden. Its artistic purpose is to copy faithfully the attractions of a veritable landscape, and to convey the real impression that a real landscape communicates. It is therefore at once a picture and a poem; perhaps even more a poem than a picture. For as nature's scenery, in its varying aspects, affects us with sensations of joy or of solemnity, of grimness or of sweetness, of force or of peace, so must the true reflection of it in the labour of the landscape gardener create not merely an impression of beauty, but a mood in the soul. The grand old landscape gardeners, those Buddhist monks who first introduced the art into Japan, and subsequently developed it into an almost occult science, carried their theory yet farther than this. They held it possible to express moral lessons in the design of a garden, and abstract ideas, such as Chastity, Faith, Piety, Content, Calm, and Connubial Bliss. Therefore were gardens contrived according to the character of the owner, whether poet, warrior, philosopher, or priest. In those ancient gardens (the art, alas, is passing away under the withering influence

* The observations of Dr. Rein on Japanese gardens are not to be recommended, in respect either to accuracy or to comprehension of the subject. Rein spent only two years in Japan, the larger part of which time he devoted to the study of the lacquer industry, the manufacture of silk and paper, and other practical matters. On these subjects his work is justly valued. But his chapters on Japanese manners and customs, art, religion, and literature show extremely little acquaintance with those topics.

of the utterly commonplace Western taste) there were expressed both a mood of nature and some rare Oriental conception of a mood of man.

I do not know what human sentiment the principal division of my garden was intended to reflect; and there is none to tell me. Those by whom it was made passed away long generations ago, in the eternal transmigration of souls. But as a poem of nature it requires no interpreter. It occupies the front portion of the grounds, facing south; and it also extends west to the verge of the northern division of the garden, from which it is partly separated by a curious screen-fence structure. There are large rocks in it, heavily mossed; and divers fantastic basins of stone for holding water; and stone lamps green with years; and a shachihoko, such as one sees at the peaked angles of castle roofs, -a great stone fish, an idealised porpoise, with its nose in the ground and its tail in the air.* There are miniature hills, with old trees upon them; and there are long slopes of green, shadowed by flowering shrubs, like river banks; and there are green knolls like islets. All these verdant elevations rise from spaces of pale yellow sand, smooth as a surface of silk and miming the curves and meanderings of a river course. These sanded spaces are not to be trodden upon; they are much too beautiful for that. The least speck of dirt would mar their effect; and it requires the trained skill of an experienced native gardener—a delightful old man he is—to keep them in perfect form. But they are traversed in various directions by lines of flat unhewn rock slabs,

* This attitude of the shachihoko is somewhat *de rigueur*, whence the common expression *shachihoko dai*, signifying "to stand on one's head."

placed at slightly irregular distances from one another, exactly like stepping-stones across a brook. The whole effect is that of the shores of a still stream in some lovely, lonesome, drowsy place.

There is nothing to break the illusion, so secluded the garden is. High walls and fences shut out streets and contiguous things; and the shrubs and the trees, heightening and thickening toward the boundaries, conceal from view even the roofs of the neighbouring katchiū-yashiki. Softly beautiful are the tremulous shadows of leaves on the sunned sand; and the scent of flowers comes thinly sweet with every waft of tepid air; and there is a humming of bees.

IV.

By Buddhism all existences are divided into *Hijō*, things without desire, such as stones and trees; and *Ujō*, things having desire, such as men and animals. This division does not, so far as I know, find expression in the written philosophy of gardens; but it is a convenient one. The folk-lore of my little domain relates both to the inanimate and the animate. In natural order, the Hijō may be considered first, beginning with a singular shrub near the entrance of the yashiki, and close to the gate of the first garden.

Within the front gateway of almost every old samurai house, and usually near the entrance of the dwelling itself, there is to be seen a small tree with large and peculiar leaves. The name of this tree in Izumo is tegashiwa, and there is one beside my door. What the scientific name of it is I do not know; nor am I quite sure of the etymology of the Japanese name. However, there is a word tegashi, meaning a bond for the hands; and the shape of the

leaves of the tegashiwa somewhat resembles the shape of a hand.

Now, in old days, when the samurai retainer was obliged to leave his home in order to accompany his daimyō to Yedo, it was customary, just before his departure, to set before him a baked tai* served up on a tegashiwa leaf. After this farewell repast, the leaf upon which the tai had been served was hung up above the door as a charm to bring the departed knight safely back again. This pretty superstition about the leaves of the tegashiwa had its origin not only in their shape but in their movement. Stirred by a wind they seemed to beckon, —not indeed after our Occidental manner, but in the way that a Japanese signs to his friend to come, by gently waving his hand up and down with the palm towards the ground.

Another shrub to be found in most Japanese gardens is the nanten,** about which a very curious belief exists. If you have an evil dream, a dream which bodes ill luck, you should whisper it to the nanten early in the morning, and then it will never come true.*** There are two varieties of this graceful plant: one which bears red berries, and one which bears white. The latter is rare. Both kinds grow in my garden. The common variety is placed close to the veranda (perhaps for the convenience of dreamers); the other occupies a little flower bed in the middle of the garden, together with a small citron-tree.

* The magnificent perch called tai (*Serranus marginalis*), which is very common along the Izumo coast, is not only justly prized as the most delicate of Japanese fish, but is also held to be an emblem of good fortune. It is a ceremonial gift at weddings and on congratulatory occasions. The Japanese call it also "the king of fishes."

** *Nandina domestica.*

*** The most lucky of all dreams, they say in Izumo, is a dream of Fuji, the Sacred Mountain. Next in order of good omen is dreaming

This most dainty citron-tree is called "Buddha's fingers,"* because of the wonderful shape of its fragrant fruits. Near it stands a kind of laurel, with lanciform leaves glossy as bronze; it is called by the Japanese yuzuri-ha,** and is almost as common in the gardens of old samurai homes as the tegashiwa itself. It is held to be a tree of good omen, because no one of its old leaves ever falls off before a new one, growing behind it, has well developed. For thus the yuzuri-ha symbolises hope that the father will not pass away before his son has become a vigorous man, well able to succeed him as the head of the family. Therefore, on every New Year's Day the leaves of the yuzuri-ha, mingled with fronds of fern, are attached to the shimenawa which is then suspended before every Izumo home.

of a falcon (*taka*). The third best subject for a dream is the egg-plant (*nasubi*). To dream of the sun or of the moon is very lucky; but it is still more so to dream of stars. For a young wife it is most fortunate to dream of *swallowing a star:* this signifies that she will become the mother of a beautiful child. To dream of a cow is a good omen; to dream of a horse is lucky, but it signifies travelling. To dream of rain or fire is good. Some dreams are held in Japan, as in the West, "to go by contraries." Therefore to dream of having one's house burned up, or of funerals, or of being dead, or of talking to the ghost of a dead person, is good. Some dreams which are good for women mean the reverse when dreamed by men; for example, it is good for a woman to dream that her nose bleeds, but for a man this is very bad. To dream of much money is a sign of loss to come. To dream of the *koi*, or of any fresh-water fish, is the most unlucky of all. This is curious, for in other parts of Japan the koi is a symbol of good fortune.

* *Tebushukan: Citrus sarkodactilis.*

** *Yuzuru* signifies to resign in favour of another; *ha* signifies a leaf. The botanical name, as given in Hepburn's dictionary, is *Daphniphillum macropodum.*

V.

The trees, like the shrubs, have their curious poetry and legends. Like the stones, each tree has its special landscape name according to its position and purpose in the composition. Just as rocks and stones form the skeleton of the ground-plan of a garden, so pines form the framework of its foliage design. They give body to the whole. In this garden there are five pines,—not pines tormented into fantasticalities, but pines made wondrously picturesque by long and tireless care and judicious trimming. The object of the gardener has been to develop to the utmost possible degree their natural tendency to rugged line and massings of foliage,—that spiny sombre-green foliage which Japanese art is never weary of imitating in metal inlay or golden lacquer. The pine is a symbolic tree in this land of symbolism. Ever green, it is at once the emblem of unflinching purpose and of vigorous old age; and its needle-shaped leaves are credited with the power of driving demons away.

There are two sakuranoki,* Japanese cherry-trees,—those trees whose blossoms, as Professor Chamberlain so justly observes, are "beyond comparison more lovely than anything Europe has to show." Many varieties are cultivated and loved; those in my garden bear blossoms of the most ethereal pink, a flushed white. When, in spring, the trees flower, it is as though fleeciest masses of cloud faintly tinged by sunset had floated down from the highest sky to fold themselves about the branches. This comparison is no poetical exaggeration; neither is it original: it is an ancient Japanese description of the most marvellous floral exhibition which nature is capable of making.

* *Cerasus pseudo-cerasus* (Lindley).

The reader who has never seen a cheery-tree blossoming in Japan cannot possibly imagine the delight of the spectacle. There are no green leaves; these come later: there is only one glorious burst of blossoms, veiling every twig and bough in their delicate mist; and the soil beneath each tree is covered deep out of sight by fallen petals as by a drift of pink snow.

But these are cultivated cherry-trees. There are others which put forth their leaves before their blossoms, such as the yamazakura, or mountain cherry.* This too, however, has its poetry of beauty and of symbolism. Sang the great Shintō writer and poet, Motowori:—

Shikishima no
Yamato-gokoro wo
Hito-towaba,
Asa-hi ni niou
*Yamazakura bana.***

Whether cultivated or uncultivated, the Japanese cherry-trees are emblems. Those planted in old samurai gardens were not cherished for their loveliness alone. Their spotless blossoms were regarded as symbolising that delicacy of sentiment and blamelessness of life belonging to high courtesy and true knightliness. "As the cherry flower is

* About this mountain cherry there is a humorous saying which illustrates the Japanese love of puns. In order fully to appreciate it, the reader should know that Japanese nouns have no distinction of singular and plural. The word *ha*, as pronounced, may signify either "leaves" or "teeth;" and the word *hana*, either "flowers" or "nose." The yamazakura puts forth its ha (leaves) before its hana (flowers). Wherefore a man whose ha (teeth) project in advance of his hana (nose) is called a yamazakura. Prognathism is not uncommon in Japan, especially among the lower classes.

** "If one should ask you concerning the heart of a true Japanese, point to the wild cherry flower glowing in the sun."

first among flowers," says an old proverb, "so should the warrior be first among men."

Shadowing the western end of this garden, and projecting its smooth dark limbs above the awning of the veranda, is a superb umenoki, Japanese plum-tree, very old, and originally planted here, no doubt, as in other gardens, for the sake of the sight of its blossoming. The flowering of the umenoki,* in the earliest spring, is scarcely less astonishing than that of the cherry-tree, which does not bloom for a full month later; and the blossoming of both is celebrated by popular holidays. Nor are these, although the most famed, the only flowers thus loved. The wistaria, the convolvulus, the peony, each in its season, form displays of efflorescence lovely enough to draw whole populations out of the cities into the country to see them. In Izumo, the blossoming of the peony is especially marvellous. The most famous place for this spectacle is the little island of Daikonshima, in the grand Naka-umi lagoon, about an hour's sail from Matsue. In May the whole island flames crimson with peonies; and even the boys and girls of the public schools are given a holiday, in order that they may enjoy the sight.

Though the plum flower is certainly a rival in beauty of the sakura-no-hana, the Japanese compare woman's beauty —physical beauty— to the cherry flower, never to the plum flower. But womanly virtue and sweetness, on the other hand, are compared to the ume-no-hana, never to the cherry blossom. It is a great mistake to affirm, as some writers have done, that the Japanese never think of comparing a woman to trees and flowers. For grace, a

* There are three noteworthy varieties: one bearing red, one pink and white, and one pure white flowers.

maiden is likened to a slender willow;* for youthful charm, to the cherry-tree in flower; for sweetness of heart, to the blossoming plum-tree. Nay, the old Japanese poets have compared woman to all beautiful things. They have even sought similes from flowers for her various poses, for her movements, as in the verse,—

*Tateba shakuyaku;***
Suwareba botan;
Aruku sugatawa
*Himeyuri**** *no hana.*†

Why, even the names of the humblest country girls are often those of beautiful trees or flowers prefixed by the honorific *O-*;†† O-Matsu (Pine), O-Take (Bamboo), O-Umé (Plum), O-Hana (Blossom), O-Iné (Ear-of-Young-Rice), not to speak of the professional flower-names of dancing-girls and of jorō. It has been argued with considerable force that the origin of certain tree-names borne by girls must be sought in the folk-conception of the tree as an emblem of longevity, or happiness, or good fortune, rather than in any popular idea of the beauty of the tree in itself. But however this may be, proverb, poem, song,

* The expression *yanagi-goshi*, "a willow-waist," is one of several in common use comparing slender beauty to the willow-tree.

** *Peonia albiflora.* The name signifies the delicacy of beauty. The simile of the *botan* (the tree peony) can be fully appreciated only by one who is acquainted with the Japanese flower.

*** Some say keshiyuri (poppy) instead of himeyuri. The latter is a graceful species of lily, *Lilium callosum.*

† "Standing, she is a shakuyaku; seated, she is a botan; and the charm of her figure in walking is the charm of a himeyuri."

†† In the higher classes of Japanese society to-day, the honorific *O* is not, as a rule, used before the names of girls, and showy appellations are not given to daughters. Even among the poor respectable classes, names resembling those of geisha, etc., are in disfavour. But those above cited are good, honest, every-day names.

and popular speech to-day yield ample proof that the Japanese comparisons of women to trees and flowers are in no wise inferior to our own in æsthetic sentiment.

VI.

That trees, at least Japanese trees, have souls, cannot seem an unnatural fancy to one who has seen the blossoming of the umenoki and the sakuranoki. This is a popular belief in Izumo and elsewhere. It is not in accord with Buddhist philosophy, and yet in a certain sense it strikes one as being much closer to cosmic truth than the old Western orthodox notion of trees as "things created for the use of man." Furthermore, there exist several odd superstitions about particular trees, not unlike certain West Indian beliefs which have had a good influence in checking the destruction of valuable timber. Japan, like the tropical world, has its goblin trees. Of these, the enoki (*Celtis Willdenowiana*) and the yanagi (drooping willow) are deemed especially ghostly, and are rarely now to be found in old Japanese gardens. Both are believed to have the power of haunting. "*Enoki ga bakeru,*" the Izumo saying is. You will find in a Japanese dictionary the word "bakeru" translated by such terms as "to be transformed," "to be metamorphosed," "to be changed," etc.; but the belief about these trees is very singular, and cannot be explained by any such rendering of the verb "bakeru." The tree itself does not change form or place, but a spectre called Ki-no-o-baké disengages itself from the tree and walks about in various guises.* Most often the shape

* Mr. Satow has found in Hirata a belief to which this seems to some extent akin,—the curious Shinto doctrine "according to which a divine being throws off portions of itself by a process of fissure, thus producing what are called waki-mi-tama, parted spirits, with

assumed by the phantom is that of a beautiful woman. The tree spectre seldom speaks, and seldom ventures to go very far away from its tree. If approached, it immediately shrinks back into the trunk or the foliage. It is said that if either an old yanagi or a young enoki be cut blood will flow from the gash. When such trees are very young it is not believed that they have supernatural habits, but they become more dangerous the older they grow.

There is a rather pretty legend—recalling the old Greek dream of dryads—about a willow-tree which grew in the garden of a samurai of Kyōto. Owing to its weird reputation, the tenant of the homestead desired to cut it down; but another samurai dissuaded him, saying: "Rather sell it to me, that I may plant it in my garden. That tree has a soul; it were cruel to destroy its life." Thus purchased and transplanted, the yanagi flourished well in its new home, and its spirit, out of gratitude, took the form of a beautiful woman, and became the wife of the samurai who had befriended it. A charming boy was the result of this union. A few years later, the daimyō to whom the ground belonged gave orders that the tree should be cut down. Then the wife wept bitterly, and for the first time revealed to her husband the whole story. "And now," she added, "I know that I must die; but our child will live, and you will always love him. This thought is my only solace." Vainly the astonished and terrified husband sought to retain her. Bidding him farewell for-

separate functions." The great god of Izumo, Oho-kuni-nushi-no-Kami, is said by Hiata to have three such "parted spirits:" his rough spirit (*ara-mi-tama*) that punishes, his gentle spirit (*nigi-mi-tama*) that pardons, and his benedictory or beneficent spirit (*saki-mi-tama*) that blesses. There is a Shinto story that the rough spirit of this god once met the gentle spirit without recognising it.

ever, she vanished into the tree. Needless to say that the samurai did everything in his power to persuade the daimyō to forego his purpose. The prince wanted the tree for the reparation of a great Buddhist temple, the San-jiu-san-gen-dō.* The tree was felled, but, having fallen, it suddenly became so heavy that three hundred men could not move it. Then the child, taking a branch in his little hand, said, "Come," and the tree followed him, gliding along the ground to the court of the temple.

Although said to be a bakemono-ki, the enoki sometimes receives highest religious honours; for the spirit of the god Kōjin, to whom old dolls are dedicated, is supposed to dwell within certain very ancient enoki-trees, and before these are placed shrines whereat people make prayers.

VII.

The second garden, on the north side, is my favourite. It contains no large growths. It is paved with blue pebbles, and its centre is occupied by a pondlet,—a miniature lake fringed with rare plants, and containing a tiny island, with tiny mountains and dwarf peach-trees and pines and azaleas, some of which are perhaps more than a century old, though scarcely more than a foot high. Nevertheless, this work, seen as it was intended to be seen, does not appear to the eye in miniature at all. From a certain angle of the guest-room looking out upon it, the appearance is that of a real lake shore with a real island beyond it, a stone's throw away. So cunning the art of the ancient gardener who contrived all this, and who has

* Perhaps the most impressive of all the Buddhist temples in Kyōto. It is dedicated to Kwannon of the Thousand Hands, and is said to contain 33,333 of her images.

been sleeping for a hundred years under the cedars of Gesshoji, that the illusion can be detected only from the zashiki by the presence of an ishidōrō, or stone lamp, upon the island. The size of the ishidōrō betrays the false perspective, and I do not think it was placed there when the garden was made.

Here and there at the edge of the pond, and almost level with the water, are placed large flat stones, on which one may either stand or squat, to watch the lacustrine population or to tend the water-plants. There are beautiful water-lilies, whose bright green leaf-disks float oilily upon the surface (*Nuphar Japonica*), and many lotus plants of two kinds, those which bear pink and those which bear pure white flowers. There are iris plants growing along the bank, whose blossoms are prismatic violet, and there are various ornamental grasses and ferns and mosses. But the pond is essentially a lotus pond; the lotus plants make its greatest charm. It is a delight to watch every phase of their marvellous growth, from the first unrolling of the leaf to the fall of the last flower. On rainy days, especially, the lotus plants are worth observing. Their great cup-shaped leaves, swaying high above the pond, catch the rain and hold it awhile; but always after the water in the leaf reaches a certain level the stem bends, and empties the leaf with a loud plash, and then straightens again. Rain-water upon a lotus-leaf is a favourite subject with Japanese metal-workers, and metal-work only can reproduce the effect, for the motion and colour of water moving upon the green oleaginous surface are exactly those of quicksilver.

VIII.

The third garden, which is very large, extends beyond

the inclosure containing the lotus pond to the foot of the wooded hills which form the northern and northeastern boundary of this old samurai quarter. Formerly all this broad level space was occupied by a bamboo grove; but it is now little more than a waste of grasses and wild flowers. In the northeast corner there is a magnificent well, from which ice-cold water is brought into the house through a most ingenious little aqueduct of bamboo pipes; and in the northwestern end, veiled by tall weeds, there stands a very small stone shrine of Inari, with two proportionately small stone foxes sitting before it. Shrine and images are chipped and broken, and thickly patched with dark green moss. But on the east side of the house one little square of soil belonging to this large division of the garden is still cultivated. It is devoted entirely to chrysanthemum plants, which are shielded from heavy rain and strong sun by slanting frames of light wood fashioned like shōji, with panes of white paper, and supported like awnings upon thin posts of bamboo. I can venture to add nothing to what has already been written about these marvellous products of Japanese floriculture considered in themselves; but there is a little story relating to chrysanthemums which I may presume to tell.

There is one place in Japan where it is thought unlucky to cultivate chrysanthemums, for reasons which shall presently appear; and that place is in the pretty little city of Himeji, in the province of Harima. Himeji contains the ruins of a great castle of thirty turrets; and a daimyō used to dwell therein whose revenue was one hundred and fifty-six thousand koku of rice. Now, in the house of one of that daimyo's chief retainers there was a maid-servant, of good family, whose name was O Kiku; and the name "Kiku" signifies a chrysanthemum flower.

Many precious things were intrusted to her charge, and among others ten costly dishes of gold. One of these was suddenly missed, and could not be found; and the girl, being responsible therefor, and knowing not how otherwise to prove her innocence, drowned herself in a well. But ever thereafter her ghost, returning nightly, could be heard counting the dishes slowly, with sobs:—

Ichi-mai,	*Yo-mai,*	*Shichi-mai,*
Ni-mai,	*Go-mai,*	*Hachi-mai,*
San-mai,	*Roku-mai,*	*Ku-mai—*

Then would be heard a despairing cry and a loud burst of weeping; and again the girl's voice counting the dishes plaintively: "One—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—*nine*"

Her spirit passed into the body of a strange little insect, whose head faintly resembles that of a ghost with long dishevelled hair; and it is called O-Kiku-mushi, or "the fly of O-Kiku;" and it is found, they say, nowhere save in Himeji. A famous play was written about O-Kiku, which is still acted in all the popular theatres, entitled Banshu O Kiku no Sara-ya-shiki; or, The Manor of the Dish of O-Kiku of Banshu.

Some declare that Banshu is only the corruption of the name of an ancient quarter of Tokyō (Yedo), where the story should have been laid. But the people of Himeji say that part of their city now called Go-Ken-Yashiki is identical with the site of the ancient manor. What is certainly true is that to cultivate chrysanthemum flowers in the part of Himeji called Go-Ken-Yashiki is deemed unlucky, because the name of O-Kiku signifies "Chrysanthemum." Therefore, nobody, I am told, ever cultivates chrysanthemums there.

IX.

Now of the ujō, or things having desire, which inhabit these gardens.

There are four species of frogs: three that dwell in the lotus pond, and one that lives in the trees. The tree frog is a very pretty little creature, exquisitely green; it has a shrill cry, almost like the note of a *semi;* and it is called amagaeru, or "the rain frog," because, like its kindred in other countries, its croaking is an omen of rain. The pond frogs are called babagaeru, shinagaeru, and Tono-san-gaeru. Of these, the first named variety is the largest and the ugliest: its colour is very disagreeable, and its full name ("babagaeru" being a decent abbreviation) is quite as offensive as its hue. The shinagaeru, or "striped frog," is not handsome, except by comparison with the previously mentioned creature. But the Tono-san-gaeru, so called after a famed daimyo who left behind him a memory of great splendour, is beautiful: its colour is a fine bronze-red.

Besides these varieties of frogs there lives in the garden a huge uncouth goggle-eyed thing which, although called here hikigaeru, I take to be a toad. "Hikigaeru" is the term ordinarily used for a bullfrog. This creature enters the house almost daily to be fed, and seems to have no fear even of strangers. My people consider it a luck-bringing visitor; and it is credited with the power of drawing all the mosquitoes out of a room into its mouth by simply sucking its breath in. Much as it is cherished by gardeners and others, there is a legend about a goblin toad of old times, which, by thus sucking in its breath, drew into its mouth, not insects, but men.

The pond is inhabited also by many small fish: inori,

or newts, with bright red bellies; and multitudes of little water-beetles, called maimaimushi, which pass their whole time in gyrating upon the surface of the water so rapidly that it is almost impossible to distinguish their shape clearly. A man who runs about aimlessly to and fro, under the influence of excitement, is compared to a maimaimushi. And there are some beautiful snails, with yellow stripes on their shells. Japanese children have a charm song which is supposed to have power to make the snail put out its horns:—

Daidaimushi, dandaimushi, tsuno chitto dashare!*
*Ame kaze fuku kara tsuno chitto dashare!***

The playground of the children of the better classes has always been the family garden, as that of the children of the poor is the temple court. It is in the garden that the little ones first learn something of the wonderful life of plants and the marvels of the insect world; and there, also, they are first taught those pretty legends and songs about birds and flowers which form so charming a part of Japanese folklore. As the home training of the child is left mostly to the mother, lessons of kindness to animals are early inculcated; and the results are strongly marked in after life. It is true, Japanese children are not entirely free from that unconscious tendency to cruelty characteristic of children in all countries, as a survival of primitive instincts. But in this regard the great moral difference between the sexes is strongly marked from the earliest years. The tenderness of the woman-soul ap-

* *Dandaimushi* in Izumo. The dictionary word is *dedemushi*. The snail is supposed to be very fond of wet weather; and one who goes out much in the rain is compared to a snail—*dedemushi no yona*.

** "Snail, snail, put out your horns a little; it rains and the wind is blowing, so put out your horns, just for a little while."

pears even in the child. Little Japanese girls who play with insects or small animals rarely hurt them, and generally set them free after they have afforded a reasonable amount of amusement. Little boys are not nearly so good, when out of sight of parents or guardians. But if seen doing anything cruel, a child is made to feel ashamed of the act, and hears the Buddhist warning, "Thy future birth will be unhappy, if thou dost cruel things."

Somewhere among the rocks in the pond lives a small tortoise,—left in the garden, probably, by the previous tenants of the house. It is very pretty, but manages to remain invisible for weeks at a time. In popular mythology, the tortoise is the servant of the divinity Kompira;* and if a pious fisherman finds a tortoise, he writes upon his back characters signifying "Servant of the Deity Kompira," and then gives it a drink of saké and sets it free. It is supposed to be very fond of saké.

Some say that the land tortoise, or "stone tortoise," only, is the servant of Kompira, and the sea tortoise, or turtle, the servant of the Dragon Empire beneath the sea. The turtle is said to have the power to create, with its breath, a cloud, a fog, or a magnificent palace. It figures in the beautiful old folk-tale of Urashima.** All tortoises are supposed to live for a thousand years, wherefore one of the most frequent symbols of longevity in Japanese art is a tortoise. But the tortoise most commonly represented by native painters and metal-workers has a peculiar tail, or rather a multitude of small tails,

* A Buddhist divinity, but within recent times identified by Shintō with the god Kotohira.

** See Professor Chamberlain's version of it in The Japanese Fairy-Tale Series, with charming illustrations by a native artist.

extending behind it like the fringes of a straw rain-coat, mino, whence it is called minogamé. Now, some of the tortoises kept in the sacred tanks of Buddhist temples attain a prodigious age, and certain water-plants attach themselves to the creatures' shells and stream behind them when they walk. The myth of the minogamé is supposed to have had its origin in old artistic efforts to represent the appearance of such tortoises with confervæ fastened upon their shells.

X.

Early in summer the frogs are surprisingly numerous, and, after dark, are noisy beyond description; but week by week their nightly clamour grows feebler, as their numbers diminish under the attacks of many enemies. A large family of snakes, some fully three feet long, make occasional inroads into the colony. The victims often utter piteous cries, which are promptly responded to, whenever possible, by some inmate of the house, and many a frog has been saved by my servant-girl, who, by a gentle tap with a bamboo rod, compels the snake to let its prey go. These snakes are beautiful swimmers. They make themselves quite free about the garden; but they come out only on hot days. None of my people would think of injuring or killing one of them. Indeed, in Izumo it is said that to kill a snake is unlucky. "If you kill a snake without provocation," a peasant assured me, "you will afterwards find its head in the komebitsu [the box in which cooked rice is kept] when you take off the lid."

But the snakes devour comparatively few frogs. Impudent kites and crows are their most implacable destroyers; and there is a very pretty weasel which lives under the kura (godown), and which does not hesitate to

take either fish or frogs out of the pond, even when the lord of the manor is watching. There is also a cat which poaches in my preserves, a gaunt outlaw, a master thief, which I have made sundry vain attempts to reclaim from vagabondage. Partly because of the immorality of this cat, and partly because it happens to have a long tail, it has the evil reputation of being a nekomata, or goblin cat.

It is true that in Izumo some kittens are born with long tails; but it is very seldom that they are suffered to grow up with long tails. For the natural tendency of cats is to become goblins; and this tendency to metamorphosis can be checked only by cutting off their tails in kittenhood. Cats are magicians, tails or no tails, and have the power of making corpses dance. Cats are ungrateful. "Feed a dog for three days," says a Japanese proverb, "and he will remember your kindness for three years; feed a cat for three years and she will forget your kindness in three days." Cats are mischievous: they tear the mattings, and make holes in the shōji, and sharpen their claws upon the pillars of tokonoma. Cats are under a curse: only the cat and the venomous serpent wept not at the death of Buddha; and these shall never enter into the bliss of the Gokuraku. For all these reasons, and others too numerous to relate, cats are not much loved in Izumo, and are compelled to pass the greater part of their lives out of doors.

XI.

Not less than eleven varieties of butterflies have visited the neighbourhood of the lotus pond within the past few days. The most common variety is snowy white. It is supposed to be especially attracted by the na, or rapeseed plant; and when little girls see it, they sing:-

Chō-chō, chō-chō, na no ha ni tomare;
*Na no ha ga iyenara, te ni tomare.**

But the most interesting insects are certainly the semi (cicadæ). These Japanese tree crickets are much more extraordinary singers than even the wonderful cicadæ of the tropics; and they are much less tiresome, for there is a different species of semi, with a totally different song, for almost every month during the whole warm season. There are, I believe, seven kinds; but I have become familiar with only four. The first to be heard in my trees is the natsuzemi, or summer semi: it makes a sound like the Japanese monosyllable *ji*, beginning wheezily, slowly swelling into a crescendo shrill as the blowing of steam, and dying away in another wheeze. This *j-i-i-iiiiiiiii* is so deafening that when two or three natsuzemi come close to the window I am obliged to make them go away. Happily the natsuzemi is soon succeeded by the minminzemi, a much finer musician, whose name is derived from its wonderful note. It is said "to chant like a Buddhist priest reciting the kyo;" and certainly, upon hearing it the first time, one can scarcely believe that one is listening to a mere cicada. The minminzemi is followed, early in autumn, by a beautiful green semi, the higurashi, which makes a singularly clear sound, like the rapid ringing of a small bell, - *kana-kana-kana-kana-kana.* But the most astonishing visitor of all comes still later, the tsuku-tsuku-boshi.[†] I fancy this creature can have no rival in the whole world of cicadæ: its music is exactly like the song of a bird. Its name, like that of the minminzemi, is

* "Butterfly, little butterfly, light upon the *na* leaf. But if thou dost not like the *na* leaf, light, I pray thee, upon my hand."

† *Boshi* means "a hat;" *tsukeru*, "to put on." But this etymology is more than doubtful.

onomatopoetic; but in Izumo the sounds of its chant are given thus:—

*Tsuku-tsuku uisu,**
Tsuku-tsuku uisu,
Tsuku-tsuku uisu;—
Ui-ōsu,
Ui-ōsu,
Ui-ōsu,
Ui-ō-s-s-s-s-s-s-su.

However, the semi are not the only musicians of the garden. Two remarkable creatures aid their orchestra. The first is a beautiful bright green grasshopper, known to the Japanese by the curious name of hotoke-no-uma, or "the horse of the dead." This insect's head really bears some resemblance in shape to the head of a horse, —hence the fancy. It is a queerly familiar creature, allowing itself to be taken in the hand without struggling, and generally making itself quite at home in the house, which it often enters. It makes a very thin sound, which the Japanese write as a repetition of the syllables *jun-ta:* and the name junta is sometimes given to the grasshopper itself. The other insect is also a green grasshopper, somewhat larger, and much shyer: it is called gisu,** on account of its chant:—

Chon,
Gisu;
Chon,
Gisu;
Chon,
Gisu;
Chon . . . (ad libitum).

* Some say "*Chokko-chokko-uisu.*" "Uisu" would be pronounced in English very much like "we-ce," the final *u* being silent. "Uiōsu" would be something like "we-oce."

** Pronounced almost as "geece."

Several lovely species of dragon-flies (*tombō*) hover about the pondlet on hot bright days. One variety—the most beautiful creature of the kind I ever saw, gleaming with metallic colours indescribable, and spectrally slender—is called Tenshi-tombō, "the Emperor's dragon-fly." There is another, the largest of Japanese dragon-flies, but somewhat rare, which is much sought after by children as a plaything. Of this species it is said that there are many more males than females; and what I can vouch for as true is that, if you catch a female, the male can be almost immediately attracted by exposing the captive. Boys, accordingly, try to secure a female, and when one is captured they tie it with a thread to some branch, and sing a curious little song, of which these are the original words:—

Konna danshō Korai ō*
Adzuma no metō ni makete
Nigeru wa haji dewa naikai?

Which signifies, "Thou, the male, King of Korea, dost thou not feel shame to flee away from the Queen of the East?" (This taunt is an allusion to the story of the conquest of Korea by the Empress Jin-gō.) And the male comes invariably, and is also caught. In Izumo the first seven words of the original song have been corrupted into *"konna unjo Korai aburu no mito;"* and the name of the male dragon-fly, *unjo,* and that of the female, *mito,* are derived from two words of the corrupted version.

XII.

Of warm nights all sorts of unbidden guests invade the house in multitudes. Two varieties of mosquitoes do their utmost to make life unpleasant, and these have

* Contraction of *kore naru.*

learned the wisdom of not approaching a lamp too closely; but hosts of curious and harmless things cannot be prevented from seeking their death in the flame. The most numerous victims of all, which come thick as a shower of rain, are called Sanemori. At least they are so called in Izumo, where they do much damage to growing rice.

Now the name Sanemori is an illustrious one, that of a famous warrior of old times belonging to the Genji clan. There is a legend that while he was fighting with an enemy on horseback his own steed slipped and fell in a rice-field, and he was consequently overpowered and slain by his antagonist. He became a rice-devouring insect, which is still respectfully called, by the peasantry of Izumo, Sanemori-San. They light fires, on certain summer nights, in the rice-fields, to attract the insect, and beat gongs and sound bamboo flutes, chanting the while, "O Sanemori, augustly deign to come hither!" A kannushi performs a religious rite, and a straw figure representing a horse and rider is then either burned or thrown into a neighbouring river or canal. By this ceremony it is believed that the fields are cleared of the insect.

This tiny creature is almost exactly the size and colour of a rice-husk. The legend concerning it may have arisen from the fact that its body, together with the wings, bears some resemblance to the helmet of a Japanese warrior.*

* A kindred legend attaches to the shiwan, a little yellow insect which preys upon cucumbers. The shiwan is said to have been once a physician, who, being detected in an amorous intrigue, had to fly for his life; but as he went his foot caught in a cucumber vine, so that he fell and was overtaken and killed, and his ghost became an insect, the destroyer of cucumber vines.

In the zoological mythology and plant mythology of Japan there exist many legends offering a curious resemblance to the old Greek tales of metamorphoses. Some of the most remarkable bits of such

Next in number among the victims of fire are the moths, some of which are very strange and beautiful. The most remarkable is an enormous creature popularly called okori-chochō, or the "ague moth," because there is a superstitious belief that it brings intermittent fever into any house it enters. It has a body quite as heavy and almost as powerful as that of the largest humming-bird, and its struggles, when caught in the hand, surprise by their force. It makes a very loud whirring sound while flying. The wings of one which I examined measured, outspread, five inches from tip to tip, yet seemed small in proportion to the heavy body. They were richly mottled with dusky browns and silver greys of various tones.

Many flying night-comers, however, avoid the lamp. Most fantastic of all visitors is the tōrō or kamakiri, called in Izumo kamakaké, a bright green praying mantis, extremely feared by children for its capacity to bite. It is very large. I have seen specimens over six inches long. The eyes of the kamakaké are a brilliant black at night, but by day they appear grass coloured, like the rest of the body. The mantis is very intelligent and surprisingly aggressive. I saw one attacked by a vigorous frog easily put its enemy to flight. It fell a prey subsequently to other inhabitants of the pond, but it required the combined efforts of several frogs to vanquish the monstrous

folklore have originated, however, in comparatively modern time. The legend of the crab called heikegani, found at Nagato, is an example. The souls of the Taira warriors who perished in the great naval battle of Dan-no-ura (now Seto-Nakai), 1185, are supposed to have been transformed into heikegani. The shell of the heikegani is certainly surprising. It is wrinkled into the likeness of a grim face, or rather into exact semblance of one of those black iron visors, or masks, which feudal warriors wore in battle, and which were shaped like frowning visages.

insect, and even then the battle was decided only when the kamakaké had been dragged into the water.

Other visitors are beetles of divers colours, and a sort of small roach called goki-kaburi, signifying "one whose head is covered with a bowl." It is alleged that the goki-kaburi likes to eat human eyes, and is therefore the abhorred enemy of Ichibata-Sama,—Yakushi-Nyorai of Ichibata,—by whom diseases of the eye are healed. To kill the goki-kaburi is consequently thought to be a meritorious act in the sight of this Buddha. Always welcome are the beautiful fireflies (*hotaru*), which enter quite noiselessly, and at once seek the darkest place in the house, slow glimmering, like sparks moved by a gentle wind. They are supposed to be very fond of water; wherefore children sing to them this little song:—

Hotaru kōe midzu nomashō;
Achi no midzu wa nigaizo;
*Kochi no midzu wa amaizo.**

A pretty grey lizard, quite different from some which usually haunt the garden, also makes its appearance at night, and pursues its prey along the ceiling. Sometimes an extraordinarily large centipede attempts the same thing, but with less success, and has to be seized with a pair of fire-tongs and thrown into the exterior darkness. Very rarely, an enormous spider appears. This creature seems inoffensive. If captured, it will feign death until certain that it is not watched, when it will run away with surprising swiftness if it gets a chance. It is hairless, and very different from the tarantula, or fukurogumo. It is called miyamagumo, or mountain spider. There are four other kinds of spiders common in this neighbourhood:

* "Come, firefly, I will give you water to drink. The water of that place is bitter; the water here is sweet."

tenagakumo, or "long-armed spider;" hiratakumo, or "flat spider;" jikumo, or "earth spider;" and totatekumo, or "door-shutting spider." Most spiders are considered evil beings. A spider seen anywhere at night, the people say, should be killed; for all spiders that show themselves after dark are goblins. While people are awake and watchful, such creatures make themselves small; but when everybody is fast asleep, then they assume their true goblin shape, and become monstrous.

XIII.

The highwood of the hill behind the garden is full of bird life. There dwell wild uguisu, owls, wild doves, too many crows, and a queer bird that makes weird noises at night,—long deep sounds of *hoo, hoo.* It is called awamakidori or the "millet-sowing bird," because when the farmers hear its cry, they know that it is time to plant the millet. It is quite small and brown, extremely shy, and, so far as I can learn, altogether nocturnal in its habits.

But rarely, very rarely, a far stranger cry is heard in those trees at night, a voice as of one crying in pain the syllables "*ho-to-to-gi-su.*" The cry and the name of that which utters it are one and the same, *hototogisu.*

It is a bird of which weird things are told; for they say it is not really a creature of this living world, but a night wanderer from the Land of Darkness. In the Meido its dwelling is among those sunless mountains of Shide over which all souls must pass to reach the place of judgment. Once in each year it comes; the time of its coming is the end of the fifth month, by the antique counting of moons; and the peasants, hearing its voice, say one to the other, "Now must we sow the rice; for the Shide-no-

taosa is with us." The word taosa signifies the head man of a mura, or village, as villages were governed in the old days; but why the hototogisu is called the taosa of Shide I do not know. Perhaps it is deemed to be a soul from some shadowy hamlet of the Shide hills, whereat the ghosts are wont to rest on their weary way to the realm of Emma, the King of Death.

Its cry has been interpreted in various ways. Some declare that the hototogisu does not really repeat its own name, but asks, *"Honzon kaketaka?"* (Has the honzon* been suspended?) Others, resting their interpretation upon the wisdom of the Chinese, aver that the bird's speech signifies, "Surely it is better to return home." This, at least, is true: that all who journey far from their native place, and hear the voice of the hototogisu in other distant provinces, are seized with the sickness of longing for home.

Only at night, the people say, is its voice heard, and most often upon the nights of great moons; and it chants while hovering high out of sight, wherefore a poet has sung of it thus:—

Hito koe wa.
Tsuki ga naitaka
*Hototogisu!***

And another has written:—

Hototogisu
Nakitsuru kata wo
Nagamureba,—

---

* By *honzon* is here meant the sacred kakemono, or picture, exposed to public view in the temples only upon the birthday of the Buddha, which is the eighth day of the old fourth month. *Honzon* also signifies the principal image in a Buddhist temple.

** "A solitary voice!
Did the Moon cry?
'Twas but the hototogisu."

Tada ariake no
*Tsuki zo nokoreru.**

The dweller in cities may pass a lifetime without hearing the hototogisu. Caged, the little creature will remain silent and die. Poets often wait vainly in the dew, from sunset till dawn, to hear the strange cry which has inspired so many exquisite verses. But those who have heard found it so mournful that they have likened it to the cry of one wounded suddenly to death.

Hototogisu
Chi ni naku koe wa
Ariake no
Tsuki yori hokani
*Kiku hito mo nashi.***

Concerning Izumo owls, I shall content myself with citing a composition by one of my Japanese students: -

"The Owl is a hateful bird that sees in the dark. Little children who cry are frightened by the threat that the Owl will come to take them away; for the Owl cries, '*Ho! ho! soretto koka! soretto koka!*' which means, 'Thou! must I enter slowly?' It also cries, '*Noritsuke hose! ho! ho!*' which means, 'Do thou make the starch to use in washing to-morrow!' And when the women hear that cry, they know that to-morrow will be a fine day. It also cries, '*Tototo,*' 'The man dies,' and '*Kotokokko,*' 'The boy dies.' So people hate it. And crows hate it so much that it is used to catch crows. The Farmer puts an Owl in the rice-field; and all the crows come to kill it, and they get caught fast in the snares. This should teach us not to give way to our dislikes for other people."

* "When I gaze towards the place where I heard the hototogisu cry, lo! there is naught save the wan morning moon."

** "Save only the morning moon, none heard the heart's-blood cry of the hototogisu."

The kites which hover over the city all day do not live in the neighbourhood. Their nests are far away upon the blue peaks; but they pass much of their time in catching fish, and in stealing from back yards. They pay the wood and the garden swift and sudden piratical visits; and their sinister cry—*pi-yorōyorō, pi-yoroyoro*—sounds at intervals over the town from dawn till sundown. Most insolent of all feathered creatures they certainly are,—more insolent than even their fellow robbers, the crows. A kite will drop five miles to filch a tai out of a fish-seller's bucket, or a fried-cake out of a child's hand, and shoot back to the clouds before the victim of the theft has time to stoop for a stone. Hence the saying, "to look as surprised as if one's aburagé* had been snatched from one's hand by a kite." There is, moreover, no telling what a kite may think proper to steal. For example, my neighbour's servant-girl went to the river the other day, wearing in her hair a string of small scarlet beads made of rice-grains prepared and dyed in a certain ingenious way. A kite lighted upon her head, and tore away and swallowed the string of beads. But it is great fun to feed these birds with dead rats or mice which have been caught in traps overnight and subsequently drowned. The instant a dead rat is exposed to view a kite pounces from the sky to bear it away. Sometimes a crow may get the start of the kite, but the crow must be able to get to the woods very swiftly indeed in order to keep his prize. The children sing this song:

Tobi, tobi, maute mise!
Ashita no ba ni

* A sort of doughnut made of bean flour, or tofu.

Karasu ni kakushite
*Nezumi yaru.**

The mention of dancing refers to the beautiful balancing motion of the kite's wings in flight. By suggestion this motion is poetically compared to the graceful swaying of a maiko, or dancing-girl, extending her arms and waving the long wide sleeves of her silken robe.

Although there is a numerous sub-colony of crows in the wood behind my house, the headquarters of the corvine army are in the pine grove of the ancient castle grounds, visible from my front rooms. To see the crows all flying home at the same hour every evening is an interesting spectacle, and popular imagination has found an amusing comparison for it in the hurry-skurry of people running to a fire. This explains the meaning of a song which children sing to the crows returning to their nests:—

Ato no karasu saki ine,
Ware ga iye ga yakeru ken,
Hayō inde midzu kake,
Midzu ga nakya yarozo,
Amattara ko ni yare,
*Ko ga nakya modose.***

Confucianism seems to have discovered virtue in the crow. There is a Japanese proverb, "*Karasu ni hampo no ko ari*," meaning that the crow performs the filial duty of hampo, or, more literally, "the filial duty of hampo exists in the crow." "Hampo" means, literally, "to return a feeding." The young crow is said to requite its

* "Kite, kite, let me see you dance, and to-morrow evening, when the crows do not know, I will give you a rat."

** "O tardy crow, hasten forward! Your house is all on fire. Hurry to throw water upon it. If there be no water, I will give you. If you have too much, give it to your child. If you have no child, then give it back to me."

parents' care by feeding them when it becomes strong. Another example of filial piety has been furnished by the dove. *"Hato ni sanshi no rei ari,"*—the dove sits three branches below its parent; or, more literally, "has the three-branch etiquette to perform."

The cry of the wild dove (*yamabato*), which I hear almost daily from the wood, is the most sweetly plaintive sound that ever reached my ears. The Izumo peasantry say that the bird utters these words, which it certainly seems to do if one listen to it after having learned the alleged syllables:—

Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété . . . (sudden pause).

"Tété" is the baby word for "father," and "kaka" for "mother;" and "poppo" signifies, in infantile speech, "the bosom."*

Wild uguisu also frequently sweeten my summer with their song, and sometimes come very near the house, being attracted, apparently, by the chant of my caged pet. The uguisu is very common in this province. It haunts all the woods and the sacred groves in the neighbourhood of the city, and I never made a journey in Izumo during the warm season without hearing its note

* The words *papa* and *mamma* exist in Japanese baby language, but their meaning is not at all what might be supposed. *Mamma*, or, with the usual honorific, *O-mamma*, means "boiled rice." *Papa* means "tobacco."

from some shadowy place. But there are uguisu and uguisu. There are uguisu to be had for one or two yen, but the finely trained, cage-bred singer may command not less than a hundred.

It was at a little village temple that I first heard one curious belief about this delicate creature. In Japan, the coffin in which a corpse is borne to burial is totally unlike an Occidental coffin. It is a surprisingly small square box, wherein the dead is placed in a sitting posture. How any adult corpse can be put into so small a space may well be an enigma to foreigners. In cases of pronounced *rigor mortis* the work of getting the body into the coffin is difficult even for the professional doshin-bozu. But the devout followers of Nichiren claim that after death their bodies will remain perfectly flexible; and the dead body of an uguisu, they affirm, likewise never stiffens, for this little bird is of their faith, and passes its life in singing praises unto the Sutra of the Lotus of the Good Law.

XIV.

I have already become a little too fond of my dwelling-place. Each day, after returning from my college duties, and exchanging my teacher's uniform for the infinitely more comfortable Japanese robe, I find more than compensation for the weariness of five class hours in the simple pleasure of squatting on the shaded veranda overlooking the gardens. Those antique garden walls, high mossed below their ruined coping of tiles, seem to shut out even the murmur of the city's life. There are no sounds but the voices of birds, the shrilling of semi, or, at long, lazy intervals, the solitary plash of a diving frog. Nay, those walls seclude me from much more than city streets. Out-

side them hums the changed Japan of telegraphs and newspapers and steamships; within dwell the all-reposing peace of nature and the dreams of the sixteenth century. There is a charm of quaintness in the very air, a faint sense of something viewless and sweet all about one; perhaps the gentle haunting of dead ladies who looked like the ladies of the old picture-books, and who lived here when all this was new. Even in the summer light —touching the grey strange shapes of stone, thrilling through the foliage of the long loved trees—there is the tenderness of a phantom caress. These are the gardens of the past. The future will know them only as dreams, creations of a forgotten art, whose charm no genius may reproduce.

Of the human tenants here no creature seems to be afraid. The little frogs resting upon the lotus leaves scarcely shrink from my touch; the lizards sun themselves within easy reach of my hand; the water-snakes glide across my shadow without fear; bands of semi establish their deafening orchestra on a plum branch just above my head, and a praying mantis insolently poses on my knee. Swallows and sparrows not only build their nests on my roof, but even enter my rooms without concern, one swallow has actually built its nest in the ceiling of the bath-room,—and the weasel purloins fish under my very eyes without any scruples of conscience. A wild uguisu perches on a cedar by the window, and in a burst of savage sweetness challenges my caged pet to a contest in song; and always through the golden air, from the green twilight of the mountain pines, there purls to me the plaintive, caressing, delicious call of the yamadori—

Tété
poppo,

Kaka
poppō,
Tété
poppō,
Kaka
poppō,
Tété . . .

No European dove has such a cry. He who can hear, for the first time, the voice of the yamabato without feeling a new sensation at his heart little deserves to dwell in this happy world.

Yet all this—the old katchiū-yashiki and its gardens—will doubtless have vanished forever before many years. Already a multitude of gardens, more spacious and more beautiful than mine, have been converted into rice-fields or bamboo groves; and the quaint Izumo city, touched at last by some long-projected railway line,—perhaps even within the present decade,—will swell, and change, and grow commonplace, and demand these grounds for the building of factories and mills. Not from here alone, but from all the land the ancient peace and the ancient charm seem doomed to pass away. For impermanency is the nature of things, more particularly in Japan; and the changes and the changers shall also be changed until there is found no place for them,—and regret is vanity. The dead art that made the beauty of this place was the art, also, of that faith to which belongs the all-consoling text, "*Verily, even plants and trees, rocks and stones, all shall enter into Nirvana.*"

XIII.

TWO STRANGE FESTIVALS.

I.

The outward signs of any Japanese matsuri are the most puzzling of enigmas to the stranger who sees them for the first time. They are many and varied; they are quite unlike anything in the way of holiday decoration ever seen in the Occident; they have each a meaning founded upon some belief or some tradition,—a meaning known to every Japanese child; but that meaning is utterly impossible for any foreigner to guess. Yet whoever wishes to know something of Japanese popular life and feeling must learn the signification of at least the most common among festival symbols and tokens. Especially is such knowledge necessary to the student of Japanese art: without it, not only the delicate humour and charm of countless designs must escape him, but in many instances the designs themselves must remain incomprehensible to him. For hundreds of years the emblems of festivity have been utilised by the Japanese in graceful decorative ways: they figure in metalwork, on porcelain, on the red or black lacquer of the humblest household utensils, on little brass pipes, on the clasps of tobacco-pouches. It may even be said that the majority of common decorative design is emblematical. The very figures of which the meaning seems most obvious,—those matchless studies* of animal

* As it has become, among a certain sect of Western Philistines and self-constituted art critics, the fashion to sneer at any writer who becomes enthusiastic about the *truth to nature* of Japanese art, I may

or vegetable life with which the Western curio-buyer is most familiar,—have usually some ethical signification which is not perceived at all. Or take the commonest design dashed with a brush upon the fusuma of a cheap hotel,—a lobster,—sprigs of pine,—tortoises waddling in a curl of water,—a pair of storks,—a spray of bamboo. It is rarely that a foreign tourist thinks of asking why such designs are used instead of others,—even when he has seen them repeated, with slight variation, at twenty different places along his route. They have become conventional simply because they are emblems of which the sense is known to all Japanese, however ignorant, but is never even remotely suspected by the stranger.

The subject is one about which a whole encyclopedia might be written, but about which I know very little,—much too little for a special essay. But I may venture, by way of illustration, to speak of the curious objects exhibited during two antique festivals still observed in all parts of Japan.

II.

The first is the Festival of the New Year, which lasts

cite here the words of England's most celebrated living *naturalist* on this very subject. Mr. Wallace's authority will scarcely, I presume, be questioned, even by the Philistines referred to:—

"Dr. Mohnike possesses a large collection of coloured sketches of the plants of Japan made by a Japanese lady, *which are the most masterly things I have ever seen.* Every stem, twig, and leaf is produced by single touches of the brush, the character and perspective of very complicated plants being admirably given, and the articulations of stem and leaves shown *in a most scientific manner.*" (*Malay Archipelago*, chap. xx.)

Now this was written in 1857, before European methods of drawing had been introduced. The same art of painting leaves, etc., with single strokes of the brush is still common in Japan,—even among the poorest class of decorators.

for three days. In Matsue its celebration is particularly interesting, as the old city still preserves many matsuri customs which have either become, or are rapidly becoming, obsolete elsewhere. The streets are then profusely decorated, and all shops are closed. Shimenawa or shimekazari,—the straw ropes which have been sacred symbols of Shintō from the mythical age,—are festooned along the façades of the dwellings, and so interjoined that you see to right or left what seems but a single mile-long shimenawa, with its straw pendents and white fluttering paper gohei, extending along either side of the street as far as the eye can reach. Japanese flags—bearing on a white ground the great crimson disk which is the emblem of the Land of the Rising Sun—flutter above the gateways; and the same national emblem glows upon countless paper lanterns strung in rows along the eaves or across the streets and temple avenues. And before every gate or doorway a kadomatsu ("gate pine-tree") has been erected. So that all the ways are lined with green, and full of bright colour.

The kadomatsu is more than its name implies. It is a young pine, or part of a pine, conjoined with plum branches and bamboo cuttings.* Pine, plum, and bamboo are growths of emblematic significance. Anciently the pine alone was used; but from the era of O-ei, the bamboo was added; and within more recent times the plum-tree.

The pine has many meanings. But the fortunate one

* There is a Buddhist saying about the kadomatsu:

Kadomatsu
Meido no tabi no
Ichi-ri-zuka.

The meaning is that each kadomatsu is a milestone on the journey to the Meido; or, in other words, that each New Year's festival signals only the completion of another stage of the ceaseless journey to death.

most generally accepted is that of endurance and successful energy in time of misfortune. As the pine keeps its green leaves when other trees lose their foliage, so the true man keeps his courage and his strength in adversity. The pine is also, as I have said elsewhere, a symbol of vigorous old age.

No European could possibly guess the riddle of the bamboo. It represents a sort of pun in symbolism. There are two Chinese characters both pronounced *setsu*,—one signifying the *node* or joint of the bamboo, and the other virtue, fidelity, constancy. Therefore is the bamboo used as a felicitous sign. The name "Setsu," be it observed, is often given to Japanese maidens,—just as the names "Faith," "Fidelia," and "Constance" are given to English girls.

The plum-tree—of whose emblematic meaning I said something in a former paper about Japanese gardens—is not invariably used, however; sometimes sakaki, the sacred plant of Shinto, is substituted for it; and sometimes only pine and bamboo form the kadomatsu.

Every decoration used upon the New Year's festival has a meaning of a curious and unfamiliar kind; and the very commonest of all—the straw rope—possesses the most complicated symbolism. In the first place it is scarcely necessary to explain that its origin belongs to that most ancient legend of the Sun-Goddess being tempted to issue from the cavern into which she had retired, and being prevented from returning thereunto by a deity who stretched a rope of straw across the entrance,—all of which is written in the Kojiki. Next observe that, although the shimenawa may be of any thickness, it must be twisted so that the direction of the twist is to the left; for in ancient Japanese philosophy the left is the "pure" or fortunate side: owing perhaps to the old belief, common among the uneducated of Europe to this day, that the

heart lies to the left. Thirdly, note that the pendent straws, which hang down from the rope at regular intervals, in tufts, like fringing, must be of different numbers according to the place of the tufts, beginning with the number three: so that the first tuft has three straws, the second five, the third seven, the fourth again three, the fifth five, and the sixth seven,—and so on, the whole length of the rope. The origin of the pendent paper cuttings (*gohei*), which alternate with the straw tufts, is likewise to be sought in the legend of the Sun-Goddess; but the gohei also represent offerings of cloth anciently made to the gods according to a custom long obsolete.

But besides the gohei, there are many other things attached to the shimenawa of which you could not imagine the signification. Among these are fern-leaves, bitter oranges, yuzuri-leaves, and little bundles of charcoal.

Why fern-leaves (*moromoki* or *urajiro*)? Because the fern-leaf is the symbol of the hope of exuberant posterity: even as it branches and rebranches so may the happy family increase and multiply through the generations.

Why bitter oranges (*daidai*)? Because there is a Chinese word daidai signifying "from generation unto generation." Wherefore the fruit called daidai has become a fruit of good omen.

But why charcoal (*sumi*)? It signifies "prosperous *changelessness*." Here the idea is decidedly curious. Even as the colour of charcoal cannot be changed, so may the fortunes of those we love remain forever unchanged in all that gives happiness! The signification of the yuzuri-leaf I explained in a former paper.

Besides the great shimenawa in front of the house, shimenawa or shimekazari* are suspended above the toko,

* The difference between the shimenawa and shimekazari is that

or alcoves, in each apartment; and over the back gate, or over the entrance to the gallery of the second story (if there be a second story), is hung a wajime, which is a very small shimekazari twisted into a sort of wreath, and decorated with fern-leaves, gohei, and yuzuri-leaves.

But the great domestic display of the festival is the decoration of the kamidana,—the shelf of the Gods. Before the household miya are placed great double rice cakes; and the shrine is beautified with flowers, a tiny shimekazari, and sprays of sakaki. There also are placed a string of cash; kabu (turnips); daikon (radishes); a tai-fish, which is the "king of fishes," dried slices of salt cuttlefish; jinbaso, or "the Seaweed of the Horse of the God;"*—also the seaweed kombu, which is a symbol of pleasure and of joy, because its name is deemed to be a homonym for gladness; and mochibana, artificial blossoms formed of rice-flour and straw.

The sambo is a curiously shaped little table on which offerings are made to the Shintō gods; and almost every well-to-do household in Izumo has its own sambō; —such a family sambo being smaller, however, than sambō used in the temples. At the advent of the New Year's Festival, bitter oranges, rice, and rice-flour cakes, native sardines (*iwashi*), chikara-iwai ("strength-rice-bread"), black peas, dried chestnuts, and a fine lobster, are all tastefully arranged upon the family sambō. Before each visitor the sambo is set; and the visitor, by saluting it with a prostration, expresses not only his heartfelt wish that all the good-fortune symbolised by the objects upon the sambo

the latter is a strictly decorative straw rope, to which many curious emblems are attached.

* It belongs to the sargassum family, and is full of air sacs. Various kinds of edible seaweed form a considerable proportion of Japanese diet.

may come to the family, but also his reverence for the household gods. The black peas (*mame*) signify bodily strength and health, because a word similarly pronounced, though written with a different ideograph, means "robust." But why a lobster? Here we have another curious conception. The lobster's body is bent double: the body of the man who lives to a very great old age is also bent. Thus the lobster stands for a symbol of extreme old age; and in artistic design signifies the wish that our friends may live so long that they will become bent like lobsters, —under the weight of years. And the dried chestnuts (*kachiguri*) are emblems of success, because the first character of their name in Japanese is the homonym of kachi, which means "victory," "conquest."

There are at least a hundred other singular customs and emblems belonging to the New Year's Festival which would require a large volume to describe. I have mentioned only a few which immediately appeal to even casual observation.

III.

The other festival I wish to refer to is that of the Setsubun, which, according to the ancient Japanese calendar, corresponded with the beginning of the natural year,— the period when winter first softens into spring. It is what we might term, according to Professor Chamberlain, "a sort of movable feast;" and it is chiefly famous for the curious ceremony of the casting out of devils,—Oni-yarai. On the eve of the Setsubun, a little after dark, the Yaku-otoshi, or caster-out of devils, wanders through the streets from house to house, rattling his shakujo,* and

* This is a curiously shaped staff with which the divinity Jizō is commonly represented. It is still carried by Buddhist mendicants, and there are several sizes of it. That carried by the Yaku-otoshi is

uttering his strange professional cry: *"Oni wa soto! — fuku wa uchi!"* [Devils out! Good-fortune in!] For a trifling fee he performs his little exorcism in any house to which he is called. This simply consists in the recitation of certain parts of a Buddhist kyō, or sutra, and the rattling of the shakujo. Afterwards dried peas (*shiro-mame*) are thrown about the house in four directions. For some mysterious reason, devils do not like dried peas—and flee therefrom. The peas thus scattered are afterward swept up and carefully preserved until the first clap of spring thunder is heard, when it is the custom to cook and eat some of them. But just why, I cannot find out; neither can I discover the origin of the dislike of devils for dried peas. On the subject of this dislike, however, I confess my sympathy with devils.

After the devils have been properly cast out, a small charm is placed above all the entrances of the dwelling to keep them from coming back again. This consists of a little stick about the length and thickness of a skewer, a single holly-leaf, and the head of a dried iwashi,—a fish resembling a sardine. The stick is stuck through the middle of the holly-leaf; and the fish's head is fastened into a split made in one end of the stick; the other end being slipped into some joint of the timber-work immediately above a door. But why the devils are afraid of the holly-leaf and the fish's head, nobody seems to know. Among the people the origin of all these curious customs appears to be quite forgotten; and the families of the upper classes who still maintain such customs believe in the

usually very short. There is a tradition that the shakujō was first invented as a means of giving warning to insects or other little creatures in the path of the Buddhist pilgrim, so that they might not be trodden upon unawares.

superstitions relating to the festival just as little as Englishmen to-day believe in the magical virtues of mistletoe or ivy.

This ancient and merry annual custom of casting out devils has been for generations a source of inspiration to Japanese artists. It is only after a fair acquaintance with popular customs and ideas that the foreigner can learn to appreciate the delicious humour of many art-creations which he may wish, indeed, to buy just because they are so oddly attractive in themselves, but which must really remain enigmas to him, so far as their inner meaning is concerned, unless he knows Japanese life. The other day a friend gave me a little card-case of perfumed leather. On one side was stamped in relief the face of a devil, through the orifice of whose yawning mouth could be seen, —painted upon the silk lining of the interior,—the laughing, chubby face of Otafuku, joyful Goddess of Good Luck. In itself the thing was very curious and pretty; but the real merit of its design was this comical symbolism of good wishes for the New Year: *"Oni wa soto!—fuku wa uchi!"*

IV.

Since I have spoken of the custom of eating some of the Setsubun peas at the time of the first spring thunder, I may here take the opportunity to say a few words about superstitions in regard to thunder which have not yet ceased to prevail among the peasantry.

When a thunder-storm comes, the big brown mosquito curtains are suspended, and the women and children — perhaps the whole family — squat down under the curtains till the storm is over. From ancient days it has been believed that lightning cannot kill anybody under a mosquito curtain. The Raijū, or Thunder-Animal, cannot pass through a mosquito-curtain. Only the other day, an old

peasant who came to the house with vegetables to sell told us that he and his whole family, while crouching under their mosquito-netting during a thunder-storm, actually saw the Lightning rushing up and down the pillar of the balcony opposite their apartment, –furiously clawing the woodwork, but unable to enter because of the mosquito-netting. His house had been badly damaged by a flash; but he supposed the mischief to have been accomplished by the Claws of the Thunder-Animal.

The Thunder-Animal springs from tree to tree during a storm, they say; wherefore to stand under trees in time of thunder and lightning is very dangerous: the Thunder Animal might step on one's head or shoulders. The Thunder-Animal is also alleged to be fond of eating the human navel; for which reason people should be careful to keep their navels well covered during storms, and to lie down upon their stomachs if possible. Incense is always burned during storms, because the Thunder-Animal hates the smell of incense. A tree stricken by lightning is thought to have been torn and scarred by the claws of the Thunder Animal; and fragments of its bark and wood are carefully collected and preserved by dwellers in the vicinity; for the wood of a blasted tree is alleged to have the singular virtue of curing toothache.

There are many stories of the Raijū having been caught and caged. Once, it is said, the Thunder-Animal fell into a well, and got entangled in the ropes and buckets, and so was captured alive. And old Izumo folk say they remember that the Thunder-Animal was once exhibited in the court of the Temple of Tenjin in Matsue, inclosed in a cage of brass; and that people paid one sen each to look at it. It resembled a badger. When the weather was clear it would sleep contentedly in its cage.

But when there was thunder in the air, it would become excited, and seem to obtain great strength, and its eyes would flash dazzlingly.

V.

There is one very evil spirit, however, who is not in the least afraid of dried peas, and who cannot be so easily got rid of as the common devils; and that is Bimbogami.

But in Izumo people know a certain household charm whereby Bimbogami may sometimes be cast out.

Before any cooking is done in a Japanese kitchen, the little charcoal fire is first blown to a bright red heat with that most useful and simple household utensil called a hifukidake. The hifukidake ("fireblow-bamboo") is a bamboo tube usually about three feet long and about two inches in diameter. At one end—the end which is to be turned toward the fire—only a very small orifice is left; the woman who prepares the meal places the other end to her lips, and blows through the tube upon the kindled charcoal. Thus a quick fire may be obtained in a few minutes.

In course of time the hifukidake becomes scorched and cracked and useless. A new "fire-blow-tube" is then made; and the old one is used as a charm against Bimbogami. One little copper coin (*rin*) is put into it, some magical formula is uttered, and then the old utensil, with the rin inside of it, is either simply thrown out through the front gate into the street, or else flung into some neighbouring stream. This—I know not why—is deemed equivalent to pitching Bimbogami out of doors, and rendering it impossible for him to return during a considerable period.

It may be asked how is the invisible presence of Bimbogami to be detected.

The little insect which makes that weird ticking noise

at night called in England the *Death-watch* has a Japanese relative named by the people Bimbomushi, or the "Poverty-Insect." It is said to be the servant of Bimbogami, the God of Poverty; and its ticking in a house is believed to signal the presence of that most unwelcome deity.

VI.

One more feature of the Setsubun festival is worthy of mention,—the sale of the hitogata ("people-shapes"). These are little figures, made of white paper, representing men, women, and children. They are cut out with a few clever scissors strokes; and the difference of sex is indicated by variations in the shape of the sleeves and the little paper obi. They are sold in the Shintō temples. The purchaser buys one for every member of the family, the priest writing upon each the age and sex of the person for whom it is intended. These hitogata are then taken home and distributed; and each person slightly rubs his body or her body with the paper, and says a little Shintō prayer. Next day the hitogata are returned to the kannushi, who, after having recited certain formulæ over them, burns them with holy fire.* By this ceremony it is hoped that all physical misfortunes will be averted from the family during a year.

* I may make mention here of another matter, in no way relating to the Setsubun.

There lingers in Izumo a wholesome—and I doubt not formerly a most valuable—superstition about the sacredness of writing. Paper upon which anything has been written, or even printed, must not be crumpled up, or trodden upon, or dirtied, or put to any base use. If it be necessary to destroy a document, the paper should be burned. I have been gently reproached in a little hotel at which I stopped for tearing up and crumpling some paper covered with my own writing.

XIV.

BY THE JAPANESE SEA.

I.

It is the fifteenth day of the seventh month,—and I am in Hōki.

The blanched road winds along a coast of low cliffs, —the coast of the Japanese Sea. Always on the left, over a narrow strip of stony land, or a heaping of dunes, its vast expanse appears, blue-wrinkling to that pale horizon beyond which Korea lies, under the same white sun. Sometimes, through sudden gaps in the cliff's verge, there flashes to us the running of the surf. Always upon the right another sea,—a silent sea of green, reaching to far misty ranges of wooded hills, with huge pale peaks behind them, —a vast level of rice-fields, over whose surface soundless waves keep chasing each other under the same great breath that moves the blue to-day from Chōsen to Japan.

Though during a week the sky has remained unclouded, the sea has for several days been growing angrier; and now the muttering of its surf sounds far into the land. They say that it always roughens thus during the period of the Festival of the Dead,—the three days of the Bon, which are the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the seventh month by the ancient calendar. And on the sixteenth day, after the shōryobune, which are the Ships of Souls, have been launched, no one dares to enter it: no boats can then be hired; all the fishermen remain at

home. For on that day the sea is the highway of the dead, who must pass back over its waters to their mysterious home; and therefore upon that day is it called Hotoke-umi,—the Buddha-Flood,—the Tide of the Returning Ghosts. And ever upon the night of that sixteenth day,—whether the sea be calm or tumultuous,—all its surface shimmers with faint lights gliding out to the open,—the dim fires of the dead; and there is heard a murmuring of voices, like the murmur of a city far-off,—the indistinguishable speech of souls.

II.

But it may happen that some vessel, belated in spite of desperate effort to reach port, may find herself far out at sea upon the night of the sixteenth day. Then will the dead rise tall about the ship, and reach long hands and murmur: "*Tago, tago o-kure!—tago o-kure!*"* Never may they be refused; but, before the bucket is given, the bottom of it must be knocked out. Woe to all on board should an entire tago be suffered to fall even by accident into the sea! for the dead would at once use it to fill and sink the ship.

Nor are the dead the only powers invisible dreaded in the time of the Hotoke-umi. Then are the Ma most powerful, and the Kappa.**

* "A bucket honourably condescend [to give]."

** The Kappa is not properly a sea goblin, but a river goblin, and haunts the sea only in the neighbourhood of river mouths.

About a mile and a half from Matsue, at the little village of Kawachi-mura, on the river called Kawachi, stands a little temple called Kawako-no-miya, or the Miya of the Kappa. (In Izumo, among the common people, the word "Kappa" is not used, but the term *Kawako*, or "The Child of the River.") In this little shrine is preserved a document said to have been signed by a Kappa. The

But in all times the swimmer fears the Kappa, the Ape of Waters, hideous and obscene, who reaches up from the deeps to draw men down, and to devour their entrails.

Only their entrails.

The corpse of him who has been seized by the Kappa may be cast on shore after many days. Unless long battered against the rocks by heavy surf, or nibbled by fishes, it will show no outward wound. But it will be light and hollow—empty like a long-dried gourd.

III.

Betimes, as we journey on, the monotony of undulating blue on the left, or the monotony of billowing green upon the right, is broken by the grey apparition of a cemetery,—a cemetery so long that our jinrikisha men, at full run, take a full quarter of an hour to pass the huge congregation of its perpendicular stones. Such visions

story goes that in ancient times the Kappa dwelling in the Kawachi used to seize and destroy many of the inhabitants of the village and many domestic animals. One day, however, while trying to seize a horse that had entered the river to drink, the Kappa got its head twisted in some way under the belly-band of the horse, and the terrified animal, rushing out of the water, dragged the Kappa into a field. There the owner of the horse and a number of peasants seized and bound the Kappa. All the villagers gathered to see the monster, which bowed its head to the ground, and audibly begged for mercy. The peasants desired to kill the goblin at once; but the owner of the horse, who happened to be the head man of the mura, said: "It is better to make it swear never again to touch any person or animal belonging to Kawachi-mura." A written form of oath was prepared and read to the Kappa. It said that It could not write, but that It would sign the paper by dipping Its hand in ink, and pressing the imprint thereof at the bottom of the document. This having been agreed to and done, the Kappa was set free. From that time forward no inhabitant or animal of Kawachi-mura was ever assaulted by the goblin.

always indicate the approach of villages; but the villages prove to be as surprisingly small as the cemeteries are surprisingly large. By hundreds of thousands do the silent populations of the hakaba outnumber the folk of the hamlets to which they belong,—tiny thatched settlements sprinkled along the leagues of coast, and sheltered from the wind only by ranks of sombre pines. Legions on legions of stones,—a host of sinister witnesses of the cost of the present to the past,—and old, old, old!—hundreds so long in place that they have been worn into shapelessness merely by the blowing of sand from the dunes, and their inscriptions utterly effaced. It is as if one were passing through the burial-ground of all who ever lived on this wind-blown shore since the being of the land.

And in all these hakaba—for it is the Bon—there are new lanterns before the newer tombs,—the white lanterns which are the lanterns of graves. To-night the cemeteries will be all aglow with lights like the fires of a city for multitude. But there are also unnumbered tombs before which no lanterns are, elder myriads, each the token of a family extinct, or of which the absent descendants have forgotten even the name. Dim generations whose ghosts have none to call them back, no local memories to love—so long ago obliterated were all things related to their lives.

IV.

Now many of these villages are only fishing settlements, and in them stand old thatched homes of men who sailed away on some eve of tempest, and never came back. Yet each drowned sailor has his tomb in the neighbouring hakaba, and beneath it something of him has been buried.

What?

Among these people of the west something is always preserved which in other lands is cast away without a thought,—the hozo-no-o, the flower-stalk of a life, the navel-string of the newly born. It is enwrapped carefully in many wrappings; and upon its outermost covering are written the names of the father, the mother, and the infant, together with the date and hour of birth,—and it is kept in the family o-mamori-bukuro. The daughter, becoming a bride, bears it with her to her new home: for the son it is preserved by his parents. It is buried with the dead; and should one die in a foreign land, or perish at sea, it is entombed in lieu of the body.

V.

Concerning them that go down into the sea in ships, and stay there, strange beliefs prevail on this far coast, —beliefs more primitive, assuredly, than the gentle faith which hangs white lanterns before the tombs. Some hold that the drowned never journey to the Meido. They quiver forever in the currents; they billow in the swaying of tides; they toil in the wake of the junks; they shout in the plunging of breakers. 'Tis their white hands that toss in the leap of the surf; their clutch that clatters the shingle, or seizes the swimmer's feet in the pull of the undertow. And the seamen speak euphemistically of the O-baké, the honourable ghosts, and fear them with a great fear.

Wherefore cats are kept on board!

A cat, they aver, has power to keep the O-baké away. How or why, I have not yet found any to tell me. I know only that cats are deemed to have power over the dead. If a cat be left alone with a corpse, will not the corpse arise and dance? And of all cats a mike neko, or cat of

three colours, is most prized on this account by sailors. But if they cannot obtain one,—and cats of three colours are rare,—they will take another kind of cat; and nearly every trading junk has a cat; and when the junk comes into port, its cat may generally be seen,—peeping through some little window in the vessel's side, or squatting in the opening where the great rudder works,—that is, if the weather be fair and the sea still.

VI.

But these primitive and ghastly beliefs do not affect the beautiful practices of Buddhist faith in the time of the Bon; and from all these little villages the shōryōbune are launched upon the sixteenth day. They are much more elaborately and expensively constructed on this coast than in some other parts of Japan; for though made of straw only, woven over a skeleton framework, they are charming models of junks, complete in every detail. Some are between three and four feet long. On the white paper sail is written the kaimyo or soul-name of the dead. There is a small water-vessel on board, filled with fresh water, and an incense cup: and along the gunwales flutter little paper banners bearing the mystic manji, which is the Sanscrit svastika.*

The form of the shōryobune and the customs in regard to the time and manner of launching them differ much in different provinces. In most places they are launched for the family dead in general, wherever buried; and they are in some places launched only at night, with small lanterns on board. And I am told also that it is the custom at certain sea-villages to launch the lanterns all by themselves, in lieu of the shoryōbune proper,—

* The Buddhist symbol 卍.

lanterns of a particular kind being manufactured for that purpose only.

But on the Izumo coast, and elsewhere along this western shore, the soul-boats are launched only for those who have been drowned at sea, and the launching takes place in the morning instead of at night. Once every year, for ten years after death, a shōryōbune is launched; in the eleventh year the ceremony ceases. Several shōryō bune which I saw at Inasa were really beautiful, and must have cost a rather large sum for poor fisher-folk to pay. But the ship-carpenter who made them said that all the relatives of a drowned man contribute to purchase the little vessel, year after year.

VII.

Near a sleepy little village called Kami-ichi I make a brief halt in order to visit a famous sacred tree. It is in a grove close to the public highway, but upon a low hill. Entering the grove I find myself in a sort of miniature glen surrounded on three sides by very low cliffs, above which enormous pines are growing, incalculably old. Their vast coiling roots have forced their way through the face of the cliffs, splitting rocks; and their mingling crests make a green twilight in the hollow. One pushes out three huge roots of a very singular shape; and the ends of these have been wrapped about with long white papers bearing written prayers, and with offerings of seaweed. The shape of these roots, rather than any tradition, would seem to have made the tree sacred in popular belief: it is the object of a special cult; and a little torii has been erected before it, bearing a votive annunciation of the most artless and curious kind. I cannot venture to offer a translation of it—though for the anthropologist and folklorist it cer-

tainly possesses peculiar interest. The worship of the tree, or at least of the Kami supposed to dwell therein, is one rare survival of a phallic cult probably common to most primitive races, and formerly wide-spread in Japan. Indeed it was suppressed by the government scarcely more than a generation ago. On the opposite side of the little hollow, carefully posed upon a great loose rock, I see something equally artless and almost equally curious,—a kitoja-no-mono, or ex voto. Two straw figures joined together and reclining side by side: a straw man and a straw woman. The workmanship is childishly clumsy; but still the woman can be distinguished from the man by the ingenious attempt to imitate the female coiffure with a straw wisp. And as the man is represented with a queue, —now worn only by aged survivors of the feudal era,—I suspect that this kitoja no mono was made after some ancient and strictly conventional model.

Now this queer ex-voto tells its own story. Two who loved each other were separated by the fault of the man; the charm of some joro, perhaps, having been the temptation to faithlessness. Then the wronged one came here and prayed the Kami to dispel the delusion of passion and touch the erring heart. The prayer has been heard; the pair have been reunited; and *she* has therefore made these two quaint effigies with her own hands, and brought them to the Kami of the pine,—tokens of her innocent faith and her grateful heart.

VIII.

Night falls as we reach the pretty hamlet of Hamamura, our last resting-place by the sea, for to-morrow our way lies inland. The inn at which we lodge is very small, but very clean and cosy; and there is a delightful

bath of natural hot water; for the yadoya is situated close to a natural spring. This spring, so strangely close to the sea beach, also furnishes, I am told, the baths of all the houses in the village.

The best room is placed at our disposal; but I linger awhile to examine a very fine shōryōbune, waiting, upon a bench near the street entrance, to be launched to-morrow. It seems to have been finished but a short time ago; for fresh clippings of straw lie scattered around it, and the kaimyō has not yet been written upon its sail. I am surprised to hear that it belongs to a poor widow and her son, both of whom are employed by the hotel.

I was hoping to see the Bon-odori at Hamamura, but I am disappointed. At all the villages the police have prohibited the dance. Fear of cholera has resulted in stringent sanitary regulations. In Hamamura the people have been ordered to use no water for drinking, cooking, or washing except the hot water of their own volcanic springs.

A little middle-aged woman, with a remarkably sweet voice, comes to wait upon us at supper-time. Her teeth are blackened and her eyebrows shaved after the fashion of married women twenty years ago; nevertheless her face is still a pleasant one, and in her youth she must have been uncommonly pretty. Though acting as a servant, it appears that she is related to the family owning the inn, and that she is treated with the consideration due to kindred. She tells us that the shōryōbune is to be launched for her husband and brother—both fishermen of the village, who perished in sight of their own home eight years ago. The priest of the neighbouring Zen temple is to come in the morning to write the kaimyō upon the sail,

as none of the household are skilled in writing the Chinese characters.

I make her the customary little gift, and, through my attendant, ask her various questions about her history. She was married to a man much older than herself, with whom she lived very happily; and her brother, a youth of eighteen, dwelt with them. They had a good boat and a little piece of ground, and she was skilful at the loom; so they managed to live well. In summer the fishermen fish at night: when all the fleet is out, it is pretty to see the line of torch fires in the offing, two or three miles away, like a string of stars. They do not go out when the weather is threatening; but in certain months the great storms (*taifu*) come so quickly that the boats are overtaken almost before they have time to hoist sail. Still as a temple pond the sea was on the night when her husband and brother last sailed away; the taifu rose before daybreak. What followed, she relates with a simple pathos that I cannot reproduce in our less artless tongue.

"All the boats had come back except my husband's; for my husband and my brother had gone out farther than the others, so they were not able to return as quickly. And all the people were looking and waiting. And every minute the waves seemed to be growing higher and the wind more terrible; and the other boats had to be dragged far up on the shore to save them. Then suddenly we saw my husband's boat coming very, very quickly. We were so glad! It came quite near, so that I could see the face of my husband and the face of my brother. But suddenly a great wave struck it upon one side, and it turned down into the water, and it did not come up again. And then we saw my husband and my brother swimming; but we could see them only when the waves lifted them up. Tall

like hills the waves were, and the head of my husband, and the head of my brother would go up, up, up, and then down, and each time they rose to the top of a wave so that we could see them they would cry out, *'Tasukete! tasukete!'** But the strong men were afraid; the sea was too terrible; I was only a woman! Then my brother could not be seen any more. My husband was old, but very strong; and he swam a long time,—so near that I could see his face was like the face of one in fear, —and he called *'Tasukete!'* But none could help him; and he also went down at last. And yet I could see his face before he went down.

"And for a long time after, every night, I used to see his face as I saw it then, so that I could not rest, but only weep. And I prayed and prayed to the Buddhas and to the Kami-Sama that I might not dream that dream. Now it never comes; but I can still see his face, even while I speak. . . . In that time my son was only a little child."

Not without sobs can she conclude her simple recital. Then, suddenly bowing her head to the matting, and wiping away her tears with her sleeve, she humbly prays our pardon for this little exhibition of emotion, and laughs —the soft low laugh *de rigueur* of Japanese politeness. This, I must confess, touches me still more than the story itself. At a fitting moment my Japanese attendant delicately changes the theme, and begins a light chat about our journey, and the danna-sama's interest in the old customs and legends of the coast. And he succeeds in amusing her by some relation of our wanderings in Izumo.

She asks whither we are going. My attendant answers probably as far as Tottori.

* "Help! help!"

"Aa! Tottori! Sō degozarimasu ka? . . . Now, there is an old story,—the Story of the Futon of Tottori. But the danna-sama knows that story?"

Indeed, the danna-sama does not, and begs earnestly to hear it. And the story is set down, somewhat as I learn it through the lips of my interpreter.

IX.

Many years ago, a very small yadoya in Tottori town received its first guest, an itinerant merchant. He was received with more than common kindness, for the landlord desired to make a good name for his little inn. It was a new inn, but as its owner was poor, most of its dogu—furniture and utensils—had been purchased from the furuteya.* Nevertheless, everything was clean, comforting, and pretty. The guest ate heartily and drank plenty of good warm saké; after which his bed was prepared on the soft floor, and he laid himself down to sleep.

But here I must interrupt the story for a few moments, to say a word about Japanese beds. Never, unless some inmate happen to be sick, do you see a bed in any Japanese house by day, though you visit all the rooms and peep into all the corners. In fact, no bed exists, in the Occidental meaning of the word. That which the Japanese call bed has no bedstead, no spring, no mattress, no sheets, no blankets. It consists of thick quilts only, stuffed, or, rather, padded with cotton, which are called futon. A certain number of futon are laid down upon the tatami (the floor mats), and a certain number of others are used for coverings. The wealthy can lie upon five or six quilts, and cover themselves with as many as

* *Furuteya*, the establishment of a dealer in second-hand wares, —*furute*.

they please, while poor folk must content themselves with two or three. And of course there are many kinds, from the servant's cotton futon which is no larger than a Western hearthrug, and not much thicker, to the heavy and superb futon silk, eight feet long by seven broad, which only the kanemochi can afford. Besides these there is the yogi, a massive quilt made with wide sleeves like a kimono, in which you can find much comfort when the weather is extremely cold. All such things are neatly folded up and stowed out of sight by day in alcoves contrived in the wall and closed with fusuma—pretty sliding screen doors covered with opaque paper usually decorated with dainty designs. There also are kept those curious wooden pillows, invented to preserve the Japanese coiffure from becoming disarranged during sleep.

The pillow has a certain sacredness; but the origin and the precise nature of the beliefs concerning it I have not been able to learn. Only this I know, that to touch it with the foot is considered very wrong; and that if it be kicked or moved thus, even by accident, the clumsiness must be atoned for by lifting the pillow to the forehead with the hands, and replacing it in its original position respectfully, with the word "go-men," signifying, I pray to be excused.]

Now, as a rule, one sleeps soundly after having drunk plenty of warm saké, especially if the night be cool and the bed very snug. But the guest, having slept but a very little while, was aroused by the sound of voices in his room,—voices of children, always asking each other the same questions:—

"Ani-San samukarō?"

"Omae samukarō?"

The presence of children in his room might annoy the guest, but could not surprise him, for in these Japanese hotels there are no doors, but only papered sliding screens between room and room. So it seemed to him that some children must have wandered into his apartment, by mistake, in the dark. He uttered some gentle rebuke. For a moment only there was silence; then a sweet, thin, plaintive voice queried, close to his ear, "Ani-San samukarō?" [Elder Brother probably is cold?], and another sweet voice made answer caressingly, "Omae samukarō?" [Nay, thou probably art cold?]

He arose and rekindled the candle in the andon,* and looked about the room. There was no one. The shoji were all closed. He examined the cupboards; they were empty. Wondering, he lay down again, leaving the light still burning; and immediately the voices spoke again, complainingly, close to his pillow:

"Ani-San samukarō?"

"Omae samukarō?"

Then, for the first time, he felt a chill creep over him, which was not the chill of the night. Again and again he heard, and each time he became more afraid. For he knew that the voices were *in the futon!* It was the covering of the bed that cried out thus.

He gathered hurriedly together the few articles belonging to him, and, descending the stairs, aroused the landlord and told what had passed. Then the host, much angered, made reply: "That to make pleased the honourable guest everything has been done, the truth is; but the honourable guest too much august saké having drank, bad dreams has seen." Nevertheless the guest

* *Andon*, a paper lantern of peculiar construction, used as a night light. Some forms of the andon are remarkably beautiful.

insisted upon paying at once that which he owed, and seeking lodging elsewhere.

Next evening there came another guest who asked for a room for the night. At a late hour the landlord was aroused by his lodger with the same story. And this lodger, strange to say, had not taken any saké. Suspecting some envious plot to ruin his business, the landlord answered passionately: "Thee to please all things honourably have been done: nevertheless, ill-omened and vexatious words thou utterest. And that my inn my means-of-livelihood is—that also thou knowest. Wherefore that such things be spoken, right-there-is-none!" Then the guest, getting into a passion, loudly said things much more evil; and the two parted in hot anger.

But after the guest was gone, the landlord, thinking all this very strange, ascended to the empty room to examine the futon. And while there, he heard the voices, and he discovered that the guests had said only the truth. It was one covering—only one—which cried out. The rest were silent. He took the covering into his own room, and for the remainder of the night lay down beneath it. And the voices continued until the hour of dawn: "Ani-San samukarō?" "Omae samukaro?" So that he could not sleep.

But at break of day he rose up and went out to find the owner of the furuteya at which the futon had been purchased. The dealer knew nothing. He had bought the futon from a smaller shop, and the keeper of that shop had purchased it from a still poorer dealer dwelling in the farthest suburb of the city. And the innkeeper went from one to the other, asking questions.

Then at last it was found that the futon had belonged to a poor family, and had been bought from the landlord of a little house in which the family had lived, in the neigh-

bourhood of the town. And the story of the futon was this:—

The rent of the little house was only sixty sen a month, but even this was a great deal for the poor folks to pay. The father could earn only two or three yen a month, and the mother was ill and could not work; and there were two children,—a boy of six years and a boy of eight. And they were strangers in Tottori.

One winter's day the father sickened; and after a week of suffering he died, and was buried. Then the long-sick mother followed him, and the children were left alone. They knew no one whom they could ask for aid; and in order to live they began to sell what there was to sell.

That was not much: the clothes of the dead father and mother, and most of their own; some quilts of cotton, and a few poor household utensils,—hibachi, bowls, cups, and other trifles. Every day they sold something, until there was nothing left but one futon. And a day came when they had nothing to eat; and the rent was not paid.

The terrible Dai kan had arrived, the season of greatest cold; and the snow had drifted too high that day for them to wander far from the little house. So they could only lie down under their one futon, and shiver together, and compassionate each other in their own childish way,—

"Ani-San, samukarō?"

"Omae samukarō?"

They had no fire, nor anything with which to make fire; and the darkness came; and the icy wind screamed into the little house.

They were afraid of the wind, but they were more afraid of the house-owner, who roused them roughly to demand his rent. He was a hard man, with an evil face. And finding there was none to pay him, he turned

the children into the snow, and took their one futon away from them, and locked up the house.

They had but one thin blue kimono each, for all their other clothes had been sold to buy food; and they had nowhere to go. There was a temple of Kwannon not far away, but the snow was too high for them to reach it. So when the landlord was gone, they crept back behind the house. There the drowsiness of cold fell upon them, and they slept, embracing each other to keep warm. And while they slept, the gods covered them with a new futon,—ghostly-white and very beautiful. And they did not feel cold any more. For many days they slept there; then somebody found them, and a bed was made for them in the hakaba of the Temple of Kwannon-of-the-Thousand-Arms.

And the innkeeper, having heard these things, gave the futon to the priests of the temple, and caused the kyō to be recited for the little souls. And the futon ceased thereafter to speak.

X.

One legend recalls another; and I hear to-night many strange ones. The most remarkable is a tale which my attendant suddenly remembers,—a legend of Izumo.

Once there lived in the Izumo village called Mochida-no ura a peasant who was so poor that he was afraid to have children. And each time that his wife bore him a child he cast it into the river, and pretended that it had been born dead. Sometimes it was a son, sometimes a daughter; but always the infant was thrown into the river at night. Six were murdered thus.

But, as the years passed, the peasant found himself

more prosperous. He had been able to purchase land and to lay by money. And at last his wife bore him a seventh child,—a boy.

Then the man said: "Now we can support a child, and we shall need a son to aid us when we are old. And this boy is beautiful. So we will bring him up."

And the infant thrived; and each day the hard peasant wondered more at his own heart,—for each day he knew that he loved his son more.

One summer's night he walked out into his garden, carrying his child in his arms. The little one was five months old.

And the night was so beautiful, with its great moon, that the peasant cried out,—

"*Aa! kon ya medzurashii e yo da!*" [Ah! to night truly a wondrously beautiful night is!]

Then the infant, looking up into his face and speaking the speech of a man, said,—

"Why, father! *the* LAST *time you threw me away* the night was just like this, and the moon looked just the same, did it not?"*

And thereafter the child remained as other children of the same age, and spoke no word.

The peasant became a monk.

XI.

After the supper and the bath, feeling too warm to sleep, I wander out alone to visit the village hakaba, a long cemetery upon a sandhill, or rather a prodigious dune, thinly covered at its summit with soil, but revealing through its crumbling flanks the story of its creation by ancient tides, mightier than tides of to-day.

* "*Otōsan! washi wo shimai ni shitesashita toki mo, chōdo kon ya no yona tsuki yo data-ne?*"—Izumo dialect.

I wade to my knees in sand to reach the cemetery. It is a warm moonlight night, with a great breeze. There are many bon-lanterns (*bondōrō*), but the seawind has blown out most of them; only a few here and there still shed a soft white glow,—pretty shrine-shaped cases of wood, with apertures of symbolic outline, covered with white paper. Visitors beside myself there are none, for it is late. But much gentle work has been done here to-day, for all the bamboo vases have been furnished with fresh flowers or sprays, and the water basins filled with fresh water, and the monuments cleansed and beautified. And in the farthest nook of the cemetery I find, before one very humble tomb, a pretty zen or lacquered dining tray, covered with dishes and bowls containing a perfect dainty little Japanese repast. There is also a pair of new chopsticks, and a little cup of tea, and some of the dishes are still warm. A loving woman's work; the prints of her little sandals are fresh upon the path.

XII.

There is an Irish folk-saying that any dream may be remembered if the dreamer, after awakening, forbear to scratch his head in the effort to recall it. But should he forget this precaution, never can the dream be brought back to memory: as well try to re-form the curlings of a smoke-wreath blown away.

Nine hundred and ninety nine of a thousand dreams are indeed hopelessly evaporative. But certain rare dreams, which come when fancy has been strangely impressed by unfamiliar experiences, dreams particularly apt to occur in time of travel, remain in recollection, imaged with all the vividness of real events.

Of such was the dream I dreamed at Hamamura, after

having seen and heard those things previously written down.

Some pale broad paved place—perhaps the thought of a temple court—tinted by a faint sun; and before me a woman, neither young nor old, seated at the base of a great grey pedestal that supported I know not what, for I could look only at the woman's face. Awhile I thought that I remembered her—a woman of Izumo; then she seemed a weirdness. Her lips were moving, but her eyes remained closed, and I could not choose but look at her.

And in a voice that seemed to come thin through distance of years she began a soft wailing chant; and, as I listened, vague memories came to me of a Celtic lullaby. And as she sang, she loosed with one hand her long black hair, till it fell coiling upon the stones. And, having fallen, it was no longer black, but blue,—pale day-blue,—and was moving sinuously, crawling with swift blue ripplings to and fro. And then, suddenly, I became aware that the ripplings were far, very far away, and that the woman was gone. There was only the sea, blue-billowing to the verge of heaven, with long slow flashings of soundless surf.

And wakening, I heard in the night the muttering of the real sea,—the vast husky speech of the Hotoke-Umi, —*the Tide of the Returning Ghosts.*

THE END.

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